

The University of Chicago

EAVESDROPPING IN ROMAN COMEDY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES IN CANDIDACY
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF LATIN LANGUAGE
AND LITERATURE
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VERGIL EMERY HIATT

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PREFACE

This study is limited to the consideration of eavesdropping as found in the twenty-six extant comedies of Plautus and Terence. However, for the purpose of comparison I have collected also from the extant fragments of Menander the scenes in which eavesdropping is clearly indicated. Line references to the plays of Plautus are taken from Lindsay, T. Macci Plauti Comoediae, (Oxford: 1910). References to Terence are taken from Kauer and Lindsay, P. Terenti Afri Comoediae, (Oxford: 1926). References to the fragments of Menander are taken from Körte, Menandri quae supersunt, (3d ed.; Leipzig: 1938).

I am deeply indebted to the late Professor Henry W. Prescott, at whose suggestion I undertook this study and whose suggestions and criticisms have been most helpful.

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INTRODUCTION

Any reader of Roman comedy must be conscious of the considerable amount of eavesdropping in the plays of Plautus and Terence. Scenes are constantly recurring in which one character stands off to one side and listens in on the monologue or dialogue of other characters, who do not appear to realize that they are being overheard. We should grant offhand that eavesdropping is a justifiable literary device in these comedies in which intrigue plays so large a part. But upon examination we discover that eavesdropping rarely makes any contribution to the furthering of intrigue, or to the development of the action at all. For the most part the eavesdropping is only nominal. It fails to accomplish what the modern reader expects from eavesdropping as a literary device. The eavesdropper seldom hears anything which the person overheard would have any desire to keep secret from him. He seldom receives any information which is of advantage to him, or which has any effect on the plot. Occasionally the eavesdropper hears something that he already knows, or he may get a hint of some information which is readily imparted to him in the conversation which follows. Frequently the eavesdropper learns that he himself is the object of search, that the person whose speech he is overhearing is seeking him to report urgent news. But in the majority of examples the overheard speech is not concerned with the action at all. It develops some general topic and, though punctuated by the eavesdropper's asides, possesses no special interest for him. In addition to its pervasive character, and its apparent ineffectiveness, a third feature of eavesdropping in comedy is worthy of notice. In the majority of scenes, ninety per cent of the entire number, there is a striking similarity in pattern. The eavesdropping scenes occur uniformly in connection with entrances. The person overheard is an entering character. The overhearing is done by some person already on stage. The eavesdropper and the entering character are brought together for dialogue at the conclusion of the latter's entrance speech.

The question naturally arises: Why did Plautus and Terence employ eavesdropping so frequently, eavesdropping which is apparently so ineffectual from a modern point of view? What is the significance of the fact that the majority of eavesdropping scenes follow a conventionalized pattern involving entrance technique? What kind of values do eavesdropping scenes possess, if they do not contribute directly to the development of further action? This problem has been noticed and commented on by Leo and others, and tentative answers have been suggested, but a careful examination of the whole number of scenes has not been made.¹

This frequent employment of apparently ineffectual eavesdropping is peculiar to New Comedy.² Leo suggests that the explanation lies in part in the disappearance of the chorus.³ Through long centuries of dramatic usage the speech and action of the principal characters had become accustomed to obtaining a reaction not only from the audience but also from the chorus on the stage. The loss of an organic chorus is compensated by the aside remarks of the eavesdropper. Jahn assigns as partial explanation the fact that newly arriving characters are given a special introduction before they are permitted to join a charac-

¹Leo, "Der Monolog im Drama," Abhandlungen d. könig. Gesellschaft d. Wissenschaften zu Göttingen (Phil. -Hist. Klasse), Vol. X, No. 5 (Berlin: 1908), 68, 74, 81-82, 87-88 ff.; Jahn, Hermes, LX (1925), 44; Miltner, Mitteilungen des Vereines klass. Phil. in Wien, VI (1929), 59 ff.; Prescott, Class. Phil., XXXIV (1939), 13-23.

²Eavesdropping is rarely found in the extant works of the earlier dramatists. I find one example in Aeschylus and two in Euripides. At the approach of Electra and her attendants Orestes and Pylades conceal themselves for the purpose of eavesdropping (Choephoroe 22 ff. and Electra 112 ff.). In the Bacchae Cadmus announces the approach of Pentheus to Teiresias. Pentheus enters with a long monologue (205 ff.) during the first part of which he appears to be unaware of the presence of Cadmus and Teiresias. In Aristophanes' Peace Hermes announces the approach of Polemos (233) and departs. Trygaeus remains and listens with asides to the conversation between Polemos and Kudoimos. Eavesdropping occurs more frequently in the New Comedy of Menander. It is sometimes difficult to determine the beginning or end of an eavesdropping scene because of the fragmentary condition of the text but it is possible to find at least fifteen examples which resemble eavesdropping scenes in Plautus and Terence. Cf. Leo, op. cit., pp. 81-87; Miltner, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

³Leo, op. cit., p. 64; Leo, Geschichte der römischen Literatur (Berlin: 1913), I, 114.

ter already on stage.¹ The character already on stage naturally assumes the role of eavesdropper during this introduction but seldom hears anything of importance to the drama. Prescott thinks that in so far as the rather inconsequential eavesdropping consists of the overhearing of monologues and monodies, the answer is to be found in the nature of entrance technique in comedy.² A striking feature of this technique is the monologue-solo-entrance. The speaker of the link monologue, held over for the subsequent scene, is forced to become an apparent eavesdropper but seldom receives any information of importance. Prescott adds, however, that eavesdropping on dialogues is common enough to make this explanation only partly satisfactory.

¹Jahn, op. cit., p. 44.

²Prescott, op. cit., p. 14.

CHAPTER I

EAVESDROPPING IN RELATION TO ENTRANCE TECHNIQUE AND THE HELDOVER CHARACTER

We suspect that so large an amount of rather ineffectual eavesdropping was not employed for its own sake by the Roman dramatists, that it is merely subsidiary to some other feature of dramatic technique. In the majority of instances eavesdropping consists of the overhearing of entrance monologue or dialogue. For such eavesdropping two requirements are necessary: (1) The entrance speech,¹ and (2) The occupied stage, (that is, some character on stage prior to the appearance of the new entrant to fill the role of eavesdropper). These requirements are satisfied in the following entrance types, involving conventional entrance technique² and the heldover character:³

¹The comic dramatist preferred to bring his characters on the stage speaking, engaged in entrance monologue, or entrance dialogue. The entrance speech is the obvious method, perhaps the only method, of getting a character on an empty stage. Even when the stage is occupied it is not unnatural for an entering character to deliver a brief, one, two, or three line entrance monologue before contact is established with the occupant of the stage. The frequent employment of such brief entrance monologues may be attributed to the dramatist's desire for motivation of entrance. The alternative would be to have dialogue begin immediately between the occupant of the stage and the new arrival. But just as characters coming upon an empty stage engage in extended entrance monologue or dialogue, so too, characters coming upon an occupied stage show the same unconcern for the length of their entrance speech. In the case of characters entering for the first time, the dramatist desires, perhaps, to give them a special introduction before allowing dialogue to develop between them and the occupant of the stage. This introduction frequently takes the form of character portrayal. (Cf. *Most.* 157; *Poen.* 210; *Pseud.* 133; *Heaut.* 381.) Many such entrance speeches serve a comic purpose, the *servus currens* monologue for example. But a large number of entrance monologues appear to be merely conventional and serve no obvious purpose. (Many entrance monologues may provide time for change of role or for covering offstage action. [Cf. Prescott, *op. cit.*, p. 2.])

²For the statistics of entrance technique in Roman comedy cf. Law, *Studies in the Songs of Plautine Comedy*, (*Menasha*: 1922), 17 ff.

³The "heldover" character is any character, or characters, held over from one chapter of action to the next. The heldover

(a) The stage is unoccupied.

1. A enters, delivers entrance monologue; B enters, delivers entrance monologue.¹
2. A enters, delivers entrance monologue; BC enter, deliver entrance dialogue.²

(b) The stage is occupied by a character held over from the previous scene.³

character is usually inactive during the introduction of a new entrant.

¹This type of entrance technique (cf. index locorum) is employed 43 times in Plautus, 14 times in Terence. Less frequently it takes the form: A enters, delivers entrance monologue; B enters; AB dialogue. (Cf. Law, op. cit., p. 17 ff.) Dialogue begins immediately upon the arrival of the second entrant, and there is, of course, no opportunity for eavesdropping. Law states that the absence of an entrance speech in the case of the second entrant is confined to special circumstances when the entrance has already been directly motivated, as for instance: A calls B out of the house, or B comes on stage looking for A.

The type of entrance distinguished by the double monologue appears to be somewhat artificial and conventionalized. Probably the explanation of the constant recurrence of the monologue in the scheme of entrance is to be found in the historical development of comedy from a choral to a non-choral drama: in the non-choral form the monologue becomes the surrogate of the chorus in the earlier form in many respects. (Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., XIV [1919], 123.) To this we may add that solo speech was a racial characteristic of the Greeks and Romans, and to that extent monologues in comedy are realistic. Many generations of dramatic productivity tended to stereotype and conventionalize entrances marked by monologue rather than by dialogue.

²(a) 2 is found only seven times in Plautus; it does not appear in Terence. (Cf. index locorum.)

³The heldover character essential to this type of entrance technique manifestly achieves continuity of action and prevents a vacant stage. Secondly, the device of the heldover character saves the dramatist the trouble of motivating an exit and (if the heldover character is needed for the following action) of motivating a re-entrance. The desire to escape motivating exits and entrances is an inevitable consequence of the fixed stage-setting as contrasted with our modern devices for shifting scenes. For if all characters must enter and exit from a street in front of several houses, a dramatist is confronted by the difficulty of inventing plausible reasons for appearances in and departures from this limited space. Changes of scene in the modern theatre facilitate motivation of entrance and exit. Thirdly, the heldover character, in so far as he often concludes the first of two scenes with a link monologue, provides an opportunity for the other actors in the first scene to appear in new roles in the second scene, a solution of difficulties imposed by a limited cast. Thus the heldover character is one of the most useful economic devices in the technique of ancient comedy and is correspondingly recurrent as a subsidiary to entrance technique. (Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., XXXIV [1919], 4.)

1. A enters, delivers entrance monologue.
2. AB enter, deliver entrance dialogue.¹

In general the action subsequent to such entrance technique results in dialogue; in the case of (a) between the earlier and the later entrant, or entrants, in the case of (b) between the heldover character and the new entrant, or entrants.² In both cases, inasmuch as in (a) the earlier entrant is usually silent during the entrance speech of the later entrant, and in (b) the heldover character is silent during the entrance speech of the new arrival, conditions that conduce to accidental overhearing or conscious eavesdropping are inherent in these typical forms of dramatic technique.³ Or, to state the matter from the point of view of the dramatist, if silent characters are provided at the beginning of scenes by the desire to promote continuous action through the heldover character, and by the stereotyped entrance technique, the relative awkwardness of silence is naturally relieved by representing the silent characters as listening in on the speaking characters.⁴

It is therefore hardly surprising that the silent character overhears in a large proportion of instances speeches that contain no information of value to the listener. The speeches overheard are more frequently entrance monologues, which are often stereotyped and conventionalized in content. Entrance dialogues are less stereotyped but often serve merely to introduce new characters and seldom contain information which leads

¹(b) 1 occurs 86 times in Plautus, 50 times in Terence. (b) 2 is found 32 times in Plautus, 15 times in Terence. (Cf. index locorum.)

²In rare instances dialogue does not result between the entering character and the eavesdropper. In the case of (a) the second entrant delivers his entrance monologue and departs without discovering the presence of the earlier entrant. In the case of (b) new arrivals sometimes appear with entrance monologue or dialogue and depart without coming into contact with the heldover character. (Cf. infra, p. 14.)

³In (a) the conditions which provide for eavesdropping are the result solely of entrance technique. In (b), in addition to the conventionalized entrance monologue, the heldover character is an essential factor.

⁴The terms "silence" and "silent character" are not intended to exclude the possibility of asides by the silent character. Such asides often punctuate and relieve his silence. (Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., XXXII [1937], 201-202.)

to a new phase in the development of the action. As far as the eavesdropping is concerned, the dramatist is primarily interested in relieving the awkward position of the non-participating actor.¹ Only rarely is he able at the same time to use eavesdropping as a device that contributes to the development of dramatic action.

¹If the dramatist did not desire to keep the silent character more or less in the action by representing him as listening in on the speaking characters, two other courses were open to him. He might occupy the silent character in such a way that his failure to participate in the action during the time of the entrance speech would be plausible. During *Tranio's* entrance monologue at *Most.* 348 ff., the four characters on stage are engaged in a drinking party, and probably keep up a feigned *sotto voce* conversation. *Nicobulus* is reading a letter during the long entrance monologue of *Chrysalus* at *Bacch.* 925. (There is no indication that *Nicobulus* left the stage at this point. Cf. Conrad, *The Technique of Continuous Action in Roman Comedy*, [Menasha: 1915], 70.) At *Amph.* 1053 *Amphitruo* is lying on the ground, stunned by a thunderbolt, and is of course out of the action during the entrance monologue of *Bromia*. On the other hand, the dramatist might choose to ignore the awkwardness of the situation and let the silent character work out his own salvation. There were probably tricks of the trade by which a non-participating actor lessened the awkwardness of his position.

CHAPTER II

THE TECHNIQUE OF EAVESDROPPING

1. The Normal Pattern

If eavesdropping in Roman comedy is an incidental by-product forced upon the dramatist by the convention of entrance technique and the device of the heldover character; it is not surprising to find that the majority of eavesdropping scenes are conventional and stereotyped in form. In eavesdropping scenes which follow the normal pattern the person overheard is the entering character. The overhearing is done by some person already on stage. The eavesdropper and the person overheard are brought together for dialogue at the conclusion of the eavesdropping. A enters with a monologue, listens to B's entrance monologue; A and B engage in dialogue. Or the stage is occupied by B, a heldover character; B listens to A's entrance monologue; A and B engage in dialogue.

The overhearing may take the form of accidental overhearing or conscious eavesdropping. Occasionally the first knowledge that the character on stage has of the new arrival comes through accidental overhearing of a part of the entrance speech. But more frequently the character on stage directs the attention of the audience to the oncoming character by some conventional announcement, either by the creaking door formula (foris crepuit, ostium aperitur), or by some more definite reference. He informs the audience that he is stepping into the background to spy on the new arrival and to hear what he has to say.¹

¹The following expressions are typical: sed huc concedam, nam crepuerunt fores; opseruabo quid agat; hinc auscultabo quam rem agant; hinc ex insidiis hisce ego insidias dabo; opprime os, is est. subausculitemus; aucupemus ex insidiis clanculum quam rem agant; huc concedamus; ex insidiis aucupa.

When the eavesdropper makes such a definite announcement of his intention to listen in we are somewhat disappointed if he fails to hear anything of importance. Even in the cases in which the eavesdropper does hear something of importance we should be better satisfied from an esthetic point of view if he

The oncoming character appears with an entrance speech during which he is unaware, or pretends to be unaware, that the stage is occupied.¹ The actor on stage may break an attentive silence with frequent or occasional asides but the main attention of the audience is shifted toward the new entrant. The stage may be occupied by one, two, less frequently by three, or even more characters. Entering characters do not usually number

listened in without thus advertising his intention. However in the majority of cases the dramatist is not interested in what the eavesdropper hears. He is interested in creating the impression that the actor, who would otherwise be entirely out of the action, is listening in on the entrance speech of the newly arriving character. The most obvious means of creating such an impression is to have the intended eavesdropper say that he is going to eavesdrop. We are handicapped by having before us only the printed text with no stage directions. Such expressions of intention, if accompanied by appropriate action as the eavesdropper tiptoed to his place of concealment, doubtless added to the comic effect. By the time of Plautus expressions of intention to eavesdrop had become conventionalized, on a par with, and sometimes inseparable from, the conventional expressions which announce the arrival of a new character.

¹The failure of the entering character to notice that the stage is occupied is due primarily to a convenient blindness. However the would-be eavesdropper generally steps into the background and removes himself from the direct line of vision of the new arrival. Until recently the belief was held that a narrow passage-way (the angiportum) existed between the houses fronting the stage and that the eavesdropper retired into this passage to escape notice. The existence of such a passage-way is now denied and the angiportum shown to be the street represented by the stage platform itself, or in some instances, a street parallel to the stage and running behind the houses. Cf. Dalman, "De aedibus scaenicis comoediae novae," Klass.-phil. Studien, herausg. von C. Jensen, heft 3 (Leipzig: 1929), 66 ff., and Harsh, Class. Phil., XXXII (1937), 44 ff. At Asin. 433 Chalinus says: "recessim dabo me ad parietem, imitabor nepam." At Aul. 606 the slave sits down on the altar to spy on the entrances of the two houses. At Aul. 666 the slave draws back ad ianuam, presumably pressing up against the wall of the temple, near its entrance, so that Euclio fails to see him when he comes out of the temple. It is apparent that some distinction was made between the outer part of the stage, the part designated by in via and the part nearer the stage buildings, designated by ante ostium or ante ianuam. Cf. Kelly Rees, Class. Phil., X (1915), 121, and Dalman, op. cit., pp. 22 ff. If this distinction was recognized, there must also have been a distinction between the part of the stage designated by in via and the generally unoccupied background near the house walls, into which an actor could withdraw and by "stage convention" remain unseen. If an actor says definitely that he is withdrawing into the angiportum (Cf. Phorm. 891), he probably steps back toward one end of the stage, into the entrance opposite the one by which the new arrival is entering. Cf. Dalman, op. cit., pp. 73 ff.

more than two.¹ The entrance speech may consist of monologue or dialogue. Instead of a monologue proper, a character coming on stage from the house may address his entrance speech to someone within, giving instructions to the members of the household, or, as frequently happens, shouting abuse at someone within.² The entrance speech often concludes with the discovery of the character who was already on stage. Otherwise the eavesdropper discloses himself at the conclusion of the entrance speech and the action continues with dialogue between the two characters. Occasionally the entering character is aware that the stage is occupied before he makes his appearance, or discovers the presence of the eavesdropper shortly after coming on stage. In such cases the entering character may pretend to think himself alone and begin, or continue, his entrance speech, intending it to be overheard by the eavesdropper. The purpose of such pretense is usually deception and the furthering of intrigue.

A few typical examples will serve to illustrate the conventional form to which the majority of eavesdropping scenes adhere.³

¹This does not include supernumeraries, whom I have generally disregarded in connection with eavesdropping.

²If we accept the existence of a *πρόθυρον* or promenade porch, which has been established in some instances by Kelly Rees (*op. cit.*, p. 121) and Dalman (*op. cit.*, pp. 22 ff.), characters coming on stage from the house and stopping to talk back into the house, or to chat with each other near the entrance, might plausibly fail to see the eavesdropper who has retired into the background near the house walls.

³The majority of the eavesdropping scenes in the extant fragments of the New Comedy of Menander follow the conventional form. In the *Epitrepontes* (a) Chaerestratus appears to have been already on the stage when Smicrines came on with an entrance monologue (1-20). Chaerestratus listens in with asides, and later enters into conversation with Smicrines. Cf. Jensen, *Menandri Reliquiae* (Berlin: 1929), XXIII; cf. also Körte's description of the action at 5 ff. (b) at *Epitr.* 42 Smicrines was on the stage when Davos and Syrus appeared arguing over the birth tokens. Cf. Jensen, XXIV, and Körte at *Epitr.* 42. However, there is no apparent eavesdropping and Smicrines does not notice them until they call to him. (c) At 407 the fragmentary condition of the text makes interpretation of the action extremely difficult. According to Jensen (XXV) Smicrines listens with asides to the cook's entrance monologue (433 ff.), and later (d) to the entrance dialogue between Charisius and the *fidicina* (445 ff.). See Körte's interpretation of the action at 432 ff. (e) Onesimus comes on stage at 558 with an entrance monologue, announces Charisius, and eavesdrops on the latter's

(a) 1. A monologue; B monologue; AB dialogue. Peniculus enters at Men. 77 with a long monologue characteristic of the parasitical profession, and at 109 announced Menaechmus coming from the house. Menaechmus appears with 15 lines of stormy abuse directed at his wife, who is within the house. Peniculus interrupts with a two-line aside (125-26) and Menaechmus continues with a song of joy that his wife has finally left the door and that he has succeeded in getting out of the house with a stolen cloak. Peniculus calls to him at 135 and dialogue follows. (a) 2. A monologue; BC dialogue; ABC dialogue. Lysiteles appears with a ten-line entrance monologue at Trin. 1115, which he concludes with a reference to the opening of the door. Charmides and Callicles come from the house (1125) engaged in dialogue. They discuss the betrothal of Charmides' daughter to Lysiteles, and Charmides describes his experiences with the syco-phanta. Lysiteles has two asides in the middle of their dialogue (1134, 1135-36), and with a final aside (1149-50) comes forward to join in the conversation.

(b) 1. The stage is occupied by B, a heldover character; A enters with monologue; AB dialogue. Holding the stage with a link monologue (Aul. 460-74), Euclio announces the approach of his prospective son-in-law, Megadorus, and says: "I wouldn't dare pass him by without stopping to talk." In an entrance monologue of more than 60 lines (475-536) Megadorus reports that his friends have approved his decision to marry the undowered daughter of Euclio. He continues with a sermon on the extravagances of richly dowered wives and the disadvantages of marrying

entrance monologue (588-612). Or perhaps Onesimus goes back into the house immediately after the announcement and comes out again at 613. Cf. Körte at 587; 612.

In the Pericliomene Doris eavesdrops with asides on the entrance speech of Sosias (176 ff.) and on the dialogue between Sosias and Davox (183-207).

In the Samia (a) Demeas announces Parmeno and the cook and withdraws to allow opportunity for their dialogue (68-80). (b) At 153 ff. the cook, keeping in the background, listens to the dialogue between Demeas and Chrysis. Cf. Körte at 153. (c) The weeping Chrysis does not hear the entrance monologue of Niceratus at 184 ff. (d) At 271 Moschion appears with an entrance monologue, announces Parmeno, and eavesdrops on his entrance monologue (296-312).

In the Georgus Myrrhena announces Davos to Philinna and they withdraw for his brief entrance monologue (35 ff.). Cf. Körte at 34.

them. Euclio expresses his approval of what he is hearing in three asides of two lines each. Megadorus catches sight of and greets Euclio at 536. Dialogue follows between them and Euclio tells Megadorus how much he has enjoyed listening to him. At Cas. 621 the entering character, Pardalisca, is aware of the presence of the eavesdropper and her entrance speech is calculated to increase his nervousness and add plausibility to the fiction which she has invented for his ears. The senex holds the stage with a link monologue (616-20) and concludes by calling attention to the uproar within the house. Pardalisca comes hurrying out with a mock-tragic monody (621-31), pretending to be in fear for her life. To the excited questions of the old man she explains that Casina has gone mad and, armed with a sword, is threatening to slay whoever approaches her. Pardalisca tells the old man that Casina's rage is particularly directed against him. (b) 2. The stage is occupied by B, a heldover character; AC enter, engaged in dialogue; ACB dialogue. At Amph. 463 Mercury holds the stage with a link monologue and announces the approach of Jupiter and Alcumena at 497-98. Jupiter, in the guise of Amphitruo is attempting to soothe Alcumena, who is complaining because of the early departure of her supposed husband. Their conversation is interspersed with comic asides from Mercury, who comes forward and joins in the conversation at 515.

As often as entrances are made upon an occupied stage by characters engaged in entrance monologue or entrance dialogue, the opportunity is provided for this conventional form of eavesdropping.¹

¹Eavesdropping does not always occur. (Cf. supra, p. 7, n. 1.) Sometimes the occupant of the stage is otherwise occupied. Cf. Amph. 1053; Bacch. 925 (see supra, p. 7, n. 1); Most. 348; Persa 777; Truc. 482. Sometimes the entering character is aware that the stage is occupied and speaks in aside, not intending to be overheard by the occupant of the stage. Cf. Aul. 79; 449; 727; Mil. 354. In a few examples the entering character is unseen and unheard by "stage convention" because the dramatist wishes the entering character to become an eavesdropper (see deviations from the conventional form of eavesdropping in the final half of this chapter). Cf. Asin. 851; Capt. 781; And. 412; 957; Eun. 394; 1025; Phorm. 606. At Amph. 551 Amphitruo and Sosia are at the harbor, which is represented as being at one end of the stage. They are approaching the house, engaged in conversation, at the conclusion of this scene (632), but may be considered to be too far away to overhear

2. Deviations from the Normal Pattern

In the usual eavesdropping scene the eavesdropper, after listening to the entrance speech, comes forward to engage in conversation with the new entrant. We have indicated that in these scenes the dramatist is not interested in eavesdropping per se. The eavesdropper is an actor temporarily out of a job, waiting in the background until the dramatist has concluded the introduction of the newly arriving character. The dramatist has chosen to occupy him by means of apparent eavesdropping in order to avoid the awkwardness of a non-participating actor. There are a few scenes however, about 20 in number, which deviate from the normal pattern and in which it appears that the dramatist is interested in eavesdropping as a dramatic device.¹ In some instances it is possible to see how the dramatist, generally by some slight variation in the usual entrance procedure, has manipulated his characters in order to bring about this eavesdropping.

A

In five examples the deviation is of this sort: Charac-

Alcumena's entrance monologue (633-53). Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., VIII (1913), 49 ff. At Stich. 58 Panegyris and Pamphilia are engaged in conversation, perhaps within the "porch," and do not hear the entrance speech of Antipho. The double stage action at Merc. 842 is less easily explained. Charinus appears at 830 with an entrance monologue. He fails to hear the entrance monologue of Eutyclus (842-50) and continues his own monologue (851-56). Eutyclus also fails to hear Charinus and continues his entrance monologue with one line (857). Not until 864 does Eutyclus realize that someone is talking.

It is not always possible to discover from the text whether eavesdropping takes place or not. If the character on stage announces the approach of the new arrival we may consider that he listens to the entrance speech, even though there are no asides and he may not hear all that is said. I have not included as examples of eavesdropping those scenes in which there is no announcement and in which the occupant of the stage appears to take no notice of the new arrival until the conclusion of the entrance speech. Cf. Aul. 808; Bacch. 179; 530; 1087; Cas. 591; Curc. 223; 384; Epid. 337; 675; Men. 273; 351; 704; 966; 990; Merc. 741; 805; Most. 904; Persa 183; Rud. 89; 306; 331; Stich. 523; Trin. 39; And. 796; Heaut. 175; 230; 420; 1045; Phorm. 591; 829; Hec. 76; 243; 767.

¹With few exceptions these scenes accomplish what the modern reader expects from eavesdropping. They are effective as a means of carrying on the action. They will be analyzed more carefully from that standpoint in the next chapter.

ters enter upon an occupied stage, engage in entrance monologue or entrance dialogue, and depart without coming into contact with, or discovering the presence of the eavesdropper.¹ At Aul. 587 the slave of Lyconides appears with a 20-line entrance monologue. Euclio comes out of the temple, delivers an eight line entrance-exit monologue (608-15), and goes into the house. Euclio does not see the slave, who comes forward after Euclio's departure and goes into the temple with exclamations of surprise and joy at what he has overheard. The same two characters are involved in a second eavesdropping scene (Aul. 667-76). Holding the stage with a link monologue (661-66), the slave announces the coming of Euclio and draws back near the entrance of the temple. Again he eavesdrops on Euclio's entrance-exit monologue (667-76) as the latter comes out of the temple and departs to hide his gold in a more secure place. In the Casina Chalinus concludes a link monologue (424-36) with an announcement of his intention to eavesdrop on Olympio and Lysidamus. He listens with frequent asides as they come out of the house, converse for 67 lines, and depart without discovering the presence of the eavesdropper. In an exit monologue (504-14) Chalinus informs the audience that he is going to carry the information which he has obtained to Lysidamus' wife. At And. 459 Davos and Simo are on stage when Mysis and Lesbia come on and converse briefly

¹There are two points of deviation from the more usual type of eavesdropping scene. The first is the failure of the eavesdropper and the person overheard to come in contact with each other. There are only six examples in which dialogue does not develop between the eavesdropper and the person overheard at the conclusion of the eavesdropping: Aul. 608; 667; Cas. 437; And. 459; 481; 416. There is one scene in Menander in which the eavesdropper overhears the speech of the entering character and departs without revealing his presence. In the Pericliromene Sosias appears with a short entrance monologue (52 ff.), after which Doris comes from the house, speaking to her mistress within (61 ff.). Sosias has a three-line aside and departs. Cf. Körte at 51. The second point of deviation is that the eavesdropping consists of the overhearing of entrance-exit monologues and entrance-exit dialogues. (By entrance-exit monologue we mean a monologue which serves both as an entrance and an exit speech. That is, a character enters, delivers an entrance speech, and makes his exit. Cf. Aul. 608; 667; And. 481. For entrance-exit dialogue cf. Cas. 437; And. 459. The overheard entrance-exit monologues and dialogues are limited to the five examples mentioned above. The entrance-exit monologue is itself comparatively rare. There are 15 examples in Plautus, two in Terence. Cf. Law, *op. cit.*, pp. 17; 21; Prescott, Trans. Amer. Phil. Assoc., LXIII (1932), 121-22.

while crossing the stage to enter the house of Glycerium (467). A second eavesdropping scene follows immediately. Davos and Simo are still on stage,¹ and Simo is expressing his views on what he has overheard during the first eavesdropping scene, when Lesbia comes out of the house. She delivers a short entrance-exit monologue (481-88) and departs without seeing the eavesdroppers. Mysis and Lesbia are brought on the stage for the sole purpose of being overheard by Simo. However, their appearance is motivated by And. 228 ff.

B

In the following scenes the deviation lies in the fact that the entering character becomes the eavesdropper.²

¹During this interval the cries of childbirth are heard from the house of Glycerium (473). There are several examples of the overhearing of a person within the house by someone on the stage. They are usually connected with childbirth. Cf. the cries of Phaedria at Aul. 691; the cry of the girl and her mother's soothing reply at Hec. 314; the cry of Sostrata's daughter at Adelph. 486. Two lines are overheard at Aul. 390 which have good comic effect as well as effect on the immediate action. Euclio, returning from the forum, sees his door standing open and hears from within the sounds of uproar and confusion caused by the cooks whom Megadorus has sent to make preparations for the wedding. As he hears the door, filled with anxiety for the safety of his pot of gold, Euclio hears someone say:

aulam maiorem, si pote, ex uicina

pete: haec est parua, capere non quit.

Euclio naturally misinterprets the meaning of these words and rushes into the house with cries of fear and anger.

²In two scenes in the Epitrepontes the entering character has an opportunity to fill the role of eavesdropper. Syriacus and his wife are on the stage, engaged in an examination of the birth tokens, when Onesimus appears (207), unannounced, with a two-line entrance monologue. There is no extended eavesdropping. His attention is directed to Syriacus and his wife and he sees and recognizes his master's ring among the birth tokens. Dialogue follows immediately. At Epitr. 254 Abrotonon comes running from the house of Chaerestratus, and, ignoring Onesimus, who was already on stage, she continues her entrance speech to herself. Cf. Körte at 254. Syriacus appears at 266 and engages Onesimus in dialogue (266-87). From Abrotonon's opening remarks following the departure of Syriacus (287), it seems likely that she listened in on the conversation between Onesimus and Syriacus. In the Pericliomene Glycera and Pataecus are engaged in dialogue when Moschion appears (344) and eavesdrops with asides. Cf. Körte at 344.

At Phorm. 609-82 the entering character, Antipho, eavesdrops on the conversation of those already on the stage and, after two of the characters have departed, enters into conversation with the third. At And. 412 Byrrria appears, unannounced and unnoticed, with a four-line entrance monologue.¹ After listening in for ten lines on the conversation of Simo, Davos, and Pamphilus, he departs with a seven-line exit monologue.² At And. 956 Simo leaves the stage and Pamphilus, a heldover character, begins a link monologue. Charinus appears immediately (957), unannounced, and catches sight of Pamphilus. But Pamphilus fails to see Charinus and continues his link monologue, concluding it with an announcement of the coming of Davos. Charinus eavesdrops with asides on the dialogue which develops between Pamphilus and Davos.³ He discloses himself and joins in the conversation at 974. The following scene from the Eunuchus is more involved.⁴ Pythias leaves the stage at 1023 and Parmeno has a link monologue of one line (1024). Gnatho and Thraso enter, unannounced, with six lines of dialogue (1025-30), at the end of which they announce the arrival of Chaerea. Chaerea comes from the house with a three-line entrance monologue. Parmeno is apparently unaware of the entrance of Gnatho and Thraso but he hears and comments in aside on the entrance monologue of Chaerea (1034).⁵ Chaerea calls to him and a brief dialogue develops between the two (1034-42). After Parmeno's exit, Chaerea holds the stage with a link monologue (1043-49) and overhears his brother's entrance monologue (1049-50). Gnatho and Thraso

¹Byrrria is brought on the stage for the purpose of over-hearing Pamphilus promise to marry as his father directs. Cf. Donatus ad 412, 2. "ad hoc uenit Byrrria, ut in errorem concitet Charinum." These scenes will be discussed more fully from the standpoint of their dramatic purpose in a later chapter.

²There is no contact between the eavesdropper and the persons overheard. Cf. supra, p. 14, n. 1.

³Cf. Donatus ad 957, 2. "hoc colloquium propter compendium fabulae inducitur, ut una narratione etiam negotium Charini transigi possit."

⁴Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., XXXIV (1939), 22, n. 26.

⁵Cf. Donatus ad 1034. "inuenta persona est, propter quam gesta hic narrat Chaerea, ut et populus et miles instruantur et sciant, quid intus gestum sit."

eavesdrop with frequent asides through these successive scenes: on the entrance monologue of Chaerea, on the dialogue between Chaerea and Parmeno, on Chaerea's link monologue, and on the dialogue between Chaerea and Phaedria. The eavesdroppers are finally betrayed by their asides (1060) and dialogue develops between them and the brothers.¹

Geta and Phormio overhear the two-line entrance speech of Demipho at Phorm. 348-49 but, pretending to be unaware of Demipho's approach, they begin an altercation between themselves which continues for 25 lines. They intend it to be overheard by Demipho. Similarly in the Andria Davos announces the coming of Chremes, and with Mysis as his tool stages a scene for the benefit of the entering character (740-82).² In a variation of the usual entrance technique Gnatho and Thraso appear at Eun. 391 and Parmeno comes from the house three lines later (394) but remains apart.³ Parmeno eavesdrops for 60 lines with infrequent asides on the dialogue between Thraso and Gnatho. At 454 Thais enters and engages in conversation with the soldier

¹It is easy to see how the dramatist has arranged this eavesdropping scene. There is an interruption in the usual entrance procedure. If we omit the scene in which Thraso and Gnatho enter, a scene which is entirely devoted to their entrance dialogue (1025-30), the entrance procedure follows conventional lines. Parmeno holds the stage with a link monologue, listens to Chaerea's entrance monologue, engages him in dialogue and departs. Chaerea has a link monologue; Phaedria appears with an entrance monologue, etc.

It is interesting to observe that these three eavesdropping scenes, And. 412; 957; Eun. 1025, which have certain points of similarity aside from the fact that the dramatist has obviously invented them for dramatic purpose, are adapted from originals by Menander. But the eavesdropping scenes are possibly the work of Terence rather than Menander. Gnatho and Thraso are not found in Menander's Eunuchus, but were taken from the Colax. Cf. Donatus ad Eun. 228. The eavesdroppers in the two scenes from the Andria belong to the secondary plot, and Donatus says concerning them: "has personas Terentius addidit, --nam non sunt apud Menandrum." (ad And. 301) Terence possibly created the characters of Charinus and Byrrhia himself, or took them from Menander's Perinthia. For the arguments for and against Terence's originality in the Andria cf. F. Schöhl, Sitzb. d. Heidelberger Akad. d. Wiss. (1912), 7 Abhandlung.

²Cf. Donatus ad And. 740. "adest ipse Chremes, cuius scaena fraudibus instructa est, ne promissas compleat nuptias."

³Cf. Donatus ad Eun. 394, 2. "tertia persona ungit in scaenam, sed separatim loquitur et secum."

and his parasite. Parmeno continues to eavesdrop until 461 when he discloses himself. In the Epidicus Apocides and Periphanes enter at 166 engaged in dialogue, and Epidicus comes from the house of Chaeribulus with a short entrance monody. He is unnoticed by the two old men but overhears a brief exchange between them (190-91). Epidicus makes a second entrance speech, which he intends the old men to overhear, when, posing as a servus currens, he pretends to come running from the forum.¹ At Pseud. 953 Pseudolus announces the pimp coming from the house. Pseudolus and Simia eavesdrop on the pimp's short entrance monologue (956-57), then, at prompting from Pseudolus, Simia makes a feigned entrance speech (960-65), which is intended for the pimp's ears. Pseudolus eavesdrops on the dialogue which follows and remains in the background until the pimp has taken Simia into the house (1016).² Ergasilus appears with a 13-line entrance monologue at Capt. 768. At 781 Hegio comes from the house with a nine-line entrance monologue, which he concludes with an announcement of his discovery of Ergasilus. Ergasilus does not hear Hegio but continues with a conventional servus currens monologue (790-830), to which Hegio listens with frequent asides.³ He calls to Ergasilus at 833 and dialogue follows. At Asin. 828 Argyrippus, Demaenetus, and Philaenium appear for the banquet scene. Conversation begins and continues between them until 851 when Artemona and the parasite appear. Artemona and the parasite converse for 31 lines, unnoticed and

¹The deviation consists of Epidicus' overhearing of the two senes. But they also overhear him, as he intends, in the feigned servus currens monologue. Cf. Duckworth, T. Macci Plauti Epidicus (Princeton: 1940), 219.

²The deviation consists of the pimp's overhearing of Simia's feigned entrance monologue. The entering character becomes the eavesdropper. But Pseudolus' eavesdropping through the whole scene is also a deviation.

³This is a variation of the type of entrance distinguished by the double monologue (cf. supra, p. 6). Instead of A monologue; B monologue; AB dialogue, we have A monologue; B monologue; A monologue; AB dialogue. In the usual type A, the first entrant is the eavesdropper. In this variation B, the second entrant, becomes the eavesdropper.

Observe that the first part of Ergasilus' speech covers Hegio's absence in the house and prevents a vacant stage. Cf. Conrad, op. cit., p. 62.

unheard by the earlier arrivals. At 882 the conversation at the banquet table is renewed and Artemona and the parasite listen with asides until Artemona rushes forward to put an end to her husband's love-making (909).

Ordinarily the entering character who becomes eavesdropper has a short entrance speech, which provides motivation for his entrance and serves to call the attention of the spectators to him. And his eavesdropping is usually interspersed with asides. But in a few instances there is no entrance speech and there are no asides.¹ After his father's departure at Merc. 468 Charinus reveals his emotional frenzy in a wildly uttered monologue and is on the point of rushing from the scene when Eutychus stops him with: "mane, mane opsecro, Charine." He informs Charinus that he has overheard everything from the doorway (477), where he has presumably been standing during the previous hundred lines of dialogue between Charinus and his father. At Hec. 607 Laches interrupts the conversation between his wife and son and informs them that he has been listening to

¹As far as the stage action is concerned these scenes do not differ essentially from any scene in which the entering character becomes the eavesdropper. We may suppose that, if eavesdropping is going on, the spectators are aware of it. However, there is a difference from the reader's standpoint. The reader is not aware that eavesdropping is taking place since there is no indication in the text that a new entrant has appeared. The reader learns of the eavesdropping only when the eavesdropper announces that he has been listening in on the conversation.

There appears to be eavesdropping at Cas. 549 ff. of which the person overheard is not aware, and of which the reader has no hint until it has been concluded. Cleustrata apparently leaves the stage at 548, but she reappears at 558 and it is probable that she has been standing in her doorway listening to Alcesimus' exit monologue (cf. infra, p. 65). We may observe as another point of deviation in this scene that the eavesdropping occurs in the middle rather than at the beginning of the scene. Cf. the eavesdropping scene at Capt. 263 ff. Hegio takes Philocrates aside for confidential questioning. Tyndarus, left standing alone, keeps up a constant flow of asides, from which it is evident that he is overhearing the conversation that is not intended for his ears. Cf. also Poen. 682.

Eavesdropping sometimes occurs offstage and is announced or reported on stage. At Phorm. 866 ff. Geta has important information to give to Antipho and Phormio, information which Geta obtained by applying his ear to the keyhole at the door of the woman's apartments. In the Samia Demea gives in his entrance monologue (1-67) an account of his accidental overhearing of the old nurse within the house. At Epid. 236 ff. Epidicus invents a fictitious account of eavesdropping for the purpose of mystifying the senes.

them from a distance. In the Rudens Gripus appears with a long entrance monody (906-37). As he is on the point of leaving the scene (938) Trachalio calls to him: "Heus, mane." Trachalio does not say that he has been eavesdropping but it is probable that he arrived on stage shortly after the appearance of Gripus (906) and listened to the story of the finding of the trunk.¹ At Mil. 1090 Milphidippa informs Palaestrio that Acroteleutium and Philocomasium have been listening to the conversation which has just taken place between themselves and the miles.²

¹Cf. Marx, Plautus Rudens (Leipzig: 1928), n. on 138; Prescott, Trans. Amer. Phil. Assoc., LXIII (1932), 123.

²Cf. Leo, Pl. Forsch. (2d ed.; Berlin: 1912), 180; Jachmann, Pl. und Attisches (Berlin: 1931), ". . . . Plautus zur Belustigung des Publikums das Hübische Motiv einführt dass Philocomasium mit Acroteleutium in der Thür des Nachbarhauses steht und zuhört."

CHAPTER III

EAVESDROPPING IN RELATION TO THE MAJOR STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF THE PLOT

We have emphasized the apparent futility of much of the eavesdropping in Roman comedy. Eavesdropping produces no tangible results from the point of view of the modern reader. The eavesdropper overhears that which has no significance for him or for the plot. However, the dramatist was not entirely unaware of the possibilities of eavesdropping as a means of carrying on the action. As we have indicated¹ it is sometimes possible to see him engage in obvious maneuvering in order to bring about eavesdropping for this purpose. But the number of scenes which make an essential contribution to the development of the action is very small. Eavesdropping scenes in which contributions of minor importance are made occur more frequently but they are few in proportion to the whole number of scenes. In discussing eavesdropping as it is related to the major structural features of the plot we shall examine the contribution which eavesdropping makes to the development of the exposition² and the complication, and its use as an aid in discovery and solution.

1. Exposition

During the exposition the dramatist is concerned with giving us the presuppositions of the play, the facts and conditions which prevailed prior to the beginning of the play. He is also interested in the introduction of new characters, in character portrayal, and in the development of atmospheric background. There are numerous examples of eavesdropping during the exposition. As characters are appearing for the first time before the

¹Cf. supra, p. 13.

²Exposition is used to designate the part of the play preceding the complication.

audience they are given a special introduction by means of entrance monologue or entrance dialogue. This introduction frequently results in eavesdropping. When the dramatist desires to bring two characters together on the stage he may introduce them separately in the A monologue, B monologue type of entrance. The first entrant naturally eavesdrops on the entrance monologue of the second entrant. When the stage is occupied by a heldover character, the heldover character becomes naturally an eavesdropper during the introduction of a new character. Philolaches is introduced and characterized in his entrance monologue at Most. 83-156. He remains on stage to take part in subsequent dialogue and becomes an eavesdropper during the long introduction and characterization of Philematium and Scapha (157-292). For the development of atmospheric background and for comic effect the dramatist brings Callidamates and Delphium on the stage in a drunken scene.¹ Philolaches and Philematium, held over for the banquet scene, eavesdrop on their entrance dialogue (313-35). At Truc. 25-94 Diniarchus introduces himself in a long monologue which provides some expository material and at the same time furnishes atmosphere.² He listens then to Astaphium's entrance monologue (95-114) of similar content and purpose. Such eavesdropping is entirely incidental. It is intended primarily to obviate the silence of the non-participating actor during the introduction of the new character. This is generally true of all eavesdropping which occurs during the exposition. Since the exposition is the part of the play which precedes the beginning of the action, eavesdropping during the exposition necessarily contributes nothing to the development of action.³

2. Complication

The majority of eavesdropping scenes occur during the

¹Cf. Fields, "The Technique of Exposition in Roman Comedy" (Ph. D. diss., University of Chicago, 1938), p. 95.

²Cf. Fields, op. cit., p. 45.

³Cf. Amph. 153 ff.; Cas. 217 ff.; Curc. 96 ff.; Epid. 104 ff.; Merc. 111 ff.; Poen. 210 ff.; And. 175 ff. Eavesdropping during the exposition may contribute minor, secondary values, such as the creation of suspense and the promotion of comic effects.

complication of the plot. As a means of developing the complication eavesdropping is employed most often for the purpose of deception and the furthering of intrigue.¹ However, both in the comedies in which intrigue plays a part and in those which are free from intrigue, the eavesdropping scenes may add other complications of various sorts.

A

Since trickery plays such a large part in the plays of Plautus and Terence it is not surprising to find that eavesdropping scenes contribute most frequently to the carrying on of intrigue. In only a few examples is the eavesdropping scene essential to the success of the intrigue. Usually it merely serves to keep the intrigue going, an intrigue which is not always brought to a successful conclusion.

In three plays, the Pseudolus, the Bacchides, and the Casina, eavesdropping appears to be essential to the success of the intrigue. In the Pseudolus the eavesdropping occurs at 594-600. The situation is as follows: Calidorus' sweetheart has been sold by the pimp, Ballio, to a Macedonian soldier, who has paid 15 minas on account. The remaining five minas are to be brought by a messenger with an identifying token. Pseudolus has engaged to trick the pimp out of the girl for the sake of his young master, and to trick his old master at the same time. At 574 Pseudolus comes on stage with an entrance monody, characteristic of the boastful, intriguing slave, in which he speaks vaguely but confidently of his plans to deceive the enemy. He concludes with announcement of the approach of Harpax and of his intention to eavesdrop. From Harpax' entrance monody (594-600) Pseudolus learns that Harpax is the emissary of the soldier to whom Ballio has sold the girl, that he is bringing a letter, the token agreed upon, and the five minas due from the purchase

¹Trickery is, for the most part, a complicating force. However, it is possible to regard it also as a resolving force in those comedies in which the solution is accomplished through the success of the trick, as in the Pseudolus, Miles, and Persa. Cf. Mattie F. Smith, "The Technique of Solution in Roman Comedy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1940), p. 11. We shall consider eavesdropping scenes which lead up to the peripety in such plays as chiefly complicating and discuss them under that head.

price. In a five-line aside Pseudolus appreciates the value of this information, makes a quick change of plan, and calls to Harpax as he is about to knock at the pimp's door. Pretending to be Ballio's man, Pseudolus is able to gain possession of the token and the letter. With these in his possession it is a simple matter to trick the pimp out of the girl. In the Bacchides Chrysalus' second intrigue against his master, Nicobulus, owes its success to an eavesdropping scene (842-69). The two chums, Mnesilochus and Pistoclerus, are enjoying the company of two courtesans, sisters, of the same name, Bacchis, at the sisters' home. The sister with whom Mnesilochus is in love has still some time to serve a soldier who has contracted for her favors for a year. She can effect her release, however, by returning payment to the soldier for the balance of the year. Chrysalus has volunteered to get the money from Mnesilochus' father, though the old man is already on his guard. At Chrysalus' dictation Mnesilochus writes a letter to his father warning him to be on his guard against Chrysalus and advising that he put Chrysalus in irons. Chrysalus carries the letter to the senex and is immediately, to his feigned surprise, bound and put under guard. Thereupon he begins to work upon the old man's fears by vague insinuations that his son's life is in danger. Through the opened door he shows the senex his son and Pistoclerus in the arms of the courtesans, and warns him darkly that the lady with his son is not a courtesan. At this moment (842) the soldier appears with an angry speech, accusing Mnesilochus, son of Nicobulus, of keeping his woman by force. "Who's that?" asks Nicobulus, and Chrysalus remarks in aside that the soldier has come at the right time for him. The soldier continues, uttering threats against the life of Mnesilochus, and in answer to Nicobulus' repeated question Chrysalus replies that this is the husband of the lady with whom his son is reclining. Continuing to work on the father's fears Chrysalus suggests that he be released from his bonds in order that he may be able to assist in the rescue. At 868 the soldier speaks again to the effect that immediate bloodshed can be averted by the payment of 200 Philippi. Hearing this Nicobulus sends Chrysalus forward to arrange the transaction. The deal which he makes with the soldier, and which Nicobulus innocently ratifies, is to pay him for the re-

maining time which is still due from Bacchis.¹ The details of a plan of intrigue are discovered in an eavesdropping scene at Cas. 437 ff.² The discovery enables Chalinus and Cleustrata to carry out a counter intrigue. The stage is vacated at 423 by all except Chalinus who remains with a link monologue of 14 lines, lamenting the fortune of the lots which gave Casina to the bailiff rather than to himself. He concludes with an announcement of the return of Olympio and Lysidamus, adding that he will listen from ambush. Chalinus himself is the butt of some derisory remarks in their first six lines (437-42) and he shows his anger and disgust in a six-line aside (443-48).³ The

¹Although this eavesdropping scene follows the usual pattern it is obvious that the dramatist has dragged Cleomachus on stage only for the purpose of having him overheard. A number of features make this scene less convincing, less natural than the one in the Pseudolus. The dramatist devotes more attention to the eavesdroppers than he does to the person overheard. The entering character has nine lines compared to 21 lines of dialogue in aside between Chrysalus and Nicobulus, whom the soldier is not supposed to hear or see. An angry soldier should not wait so long--18 lines--between speeches. Secondly, it appears that Chrysalus was looking forward to this scene when he had the letter written (715 ff.), and that he was preparing the way for it by his insinuations to Nicobulus at 814 ff. Yet, although the soldier's appearance is motivated by the driving away of the parasite at 592 ff., Chrysalus could not have known that he would appear at this particular time and speak words which could be so misinterpreted by Nicobulus. The scene in the Pseudolus is more convincing because the dramatist has taken the trouble to create the impression that Pseudolus already has a plan which he dis-cards in favor of a better one as the result of the eavesdropping. The approach of Harpax at this particular time is not so apparently necessary to the success of the intrigue. It is a natural coincidence, not obvious maneuvering.

²This scene deviates from the normal pattern. Cf. supra, p. 14.

³Fraenkel ("Plautinisches im Plautus," Philol. Untersuchungen, XXVIII [Berlin: 1922], 212 ff.) is likely to see evidence of Roman material and Plautine expansion in a long aside, particularly if the aside interrupts dialogue. According to Fraenkel, when a character is expressing his thoughts to himself, he may stop and begin again, and an interruption by an aside is permissible. But when two people are talking together the aside should be limited to a single verse, or two at most, a rule followed by Menander and Terence but not always by Plautus. It is true that the long aside is more frequent in Plautus than in Terence. It is probable that in many instances Plautus is responsible for the expansion or the insertion of asides. That a character engaged in monologue or dialogue should cease speaking in order to allow another character, of whose presence he is supposed to be unaware, opportunity to speak an aside, is some-

dialogue continues, characterized by a low and vulgar type of wit, revealing the intimate relations between master and bailiff. At 467 the talk turns to Casina and plans for the night. Listening with frequent asides, Chalinus learns that Olympio is marrying Casina only to secure her as a mistress for his master. He then hears in detail that their neighbor, Alcesimus, has provided a love-nest. His wife will be invited over to assist at the wedding and will be detained for the night. Alcesimus will keep out of the way. Olympio will pretend to take his new bride to the country but the country will be the house next door. There Lysidamus will enjoy the bride. After the conspirators depart (503) Chalinus comes forward with an exultant monologue which shows that he realizes the value of the information which he has overheard. Armed with these details Cleustrata and

what unnatural. Whether the interruption of monologue by such asides is less natural than the interruption of dialogue depends on the circumstances in each case. Cf. Bacch. 842 ff. supra, p. 22 and n. 1. Of similar nature are the examples in which characters break off dialogue or monologue to allow opportunity for entrance speeches, or speeches of any kind, by persons of whose presence they are apparently unaware. In the Epitrepontes, Onesimus interrupts his entrance monologue (242-54) in order that Abrotonon may come on with an entrance monologue. He is apparently unconscious of her coming and his one-line interruption (259) in the middle of her speech continues his own entrance monologue. At And. 403 Simo enters with one line and sees and hears no one during the seven lines of dialogue between Davos and Pamphilus, and the four-line entrance monologue of Byrria (412-15). The dialogue of Davos and Pamphilus is broken off by the four-line entrance monologue of Byrria though they do not appear to hear or see him. Byrria eavesdrops on the conversation which develops between Davos, Pamphilus, and Simo (416-24) and departs with a seven-line exit monologue, unseen and unheard. Pamphilus leaves the stage at 424; Davos and Simo continue the conversation after the departure of Byrria at 431. In the Eunuchus (1050 ff.) the dialogue of Chaerea and Phaedria is broken off by the ten-line conversation in aside by Gnatho and Thraso. (These examples from the Andria and Eunuchus are taken from sections which are suspected of contamination. Cf. Donatus' comment on And. 301, and on Eun. 228.) At Phorm. 590 the conversation of Chremes and Demipho is broken off during the 20 lines taken up by the entrance speeches of Geta and Antipho, whom Chremes and Demipho fail to hear or see.

This feature of Roman comedy in which an actor on stage is seen and heard by the audience but not by other occupants of the stage may be in part explained by the great length of the Roman stage (cf. Dziatzko-Haule, Phormio [4th ed.; Leipzig: 1913], p. 35) and in part by "stage convention" (cf. Miltner, op. cit., p. 59). For a discussion of the aside in relation to Greek comedy see Schaffner, De aversum loquendi ratione in comoedia Graeca (Darmstadt: 1911).

Chalinus are able to bring about the complete defeat and discomfiture of their enemies.¹

Three eavesdropping scenes² in the Andria serve to keep the intrigue going, an intrigue which is successful in so far as it delays the marriage of Pamphilus until Glycerium's parentage is discovered through the agency of Crito. Davos and Simo are on stage in the first eavesdropping scene (459-67), and Mysis returns with the obstetrix whom she had been ordered to summon (228). The two women converse briefly, not seeing the men, as they cross the stage to enter the house of Glycerium. There is no announcement from Davos or Simo, but Simo betrays his interest in an aside when he recognizes the maid of the woman with whom his son is in love. His interest changes to consternation when he learns from their talk that Glycerium is soon to be delivered of a child, fathered by his son, and that his son has given his word to acknowledge the child. This information is a stunning blow to Simo but he quickly recovers. He has been anticipating that Davos would attempt some trick in order to prevent his son's marriage with the daughter of Chremes. With sudden inspiration he decides that this is the trick and he accuses Davos of staging the scene for his benefit. He refuses to believe that Glycerium is with child at all. At this moment (473) the cries of childbirth are heard from within and Simo exclaims: "hui tam cito? ridiculum: postquam ante ostium audivit stare adproperat." The second eavesdropping scene follows immediately. At 481 the obstetrix appears in the doorway calling back instructions for the care of mother and child. As she departs she remarks that a fine son has been born to Pamphilus (486). Simo is firmly convinced that an attempt has been made to trick him, and although he receives information of considerable importance, its value to him is worthless because he refuses to accept it.

¹In this scene eavesdropping is used as a means of discovery. As a technical term "discovery" may be applied to the revelation of trickery as well as error. Cf. Smith, op. cit., p. 12, n. 1. But the discovery of trickery in this instance has a complicating function since the knowledge of the intrigue of Lysidamus and Olympio enables Chalinus and Cleustrata to form a counter intrigue. Cf. Smith, op. cit., p. 77, n. 1. "Discovery of error may likewise have only a complicating function."

²These three scenes are all deviations from the normal pattern. Cf. supra, pp. 14-16.

But Davos turns the situation to his own advantage. The success of his intrigue demands that Simo be kept in ignorance of the true state of affairs and that Chremes know or suspect enough of the true situation to persist in his refusal to allow his daughter to marry Pamphilus. At first Davos is confused and alarmed by the revelations and prays: "*utinam hic surdus aut haec muta facta sit!*" (463). But seeing Simo's error he utilizes the old man's suspicions to confirm the deception and gain further time for himself and Pamphilus.¹ In a third eavesdropping scene (And. 740-83) Davos contrives to let Chremes overhear the facts and discover the true situation. Davos has brought the newly born child from the house of Glycerium and asked Mysis to place it on his master's doorstep (724 ff.). But catching sight of the approaching Chremes, he makes a quick change of plan. Hastily placing the baby on Simo's doorstep, Davos tells Mysis that he will leave and make a feigned entrance, pretending to be arriving now for the first time, and that she is to take her cue from his words. Chremes comes on with a three-line entrance speech (740-42), sees the woman and the child, and asks Mysis if she put it there. Mysis lacks the facile wit of the intriguing slave; she doesn't answer Chremes but looks about in bewilderment for Davos. At 744 Davos reappears with an attempt at a convincing entrance speech in which he comments on the crowds in the forum, the great number of lawsuits going on, the high cost of provisions, and confesses in an aside that he can't think of anything else to say. Then appearing to catch sight of Mysis and the child but pretending to be unaware of the presence of Chremes, he begins to abuse her. He accuses Mysis of placing the child there so that Chremes will see it, of palming off a child brought in from outside as a son of Glycerium by Pamphilus, of inventing the fiction that Glycerium is an Athenian citizen and that Pamphilus will be forced to marry her, all part of a plot to deceive Chremes so that he will not allow his daughter to marry Pamphilus. But he says of Chremes: "*tanto hercle magis dabit.*" To which Chremes replies in an emphatic aside: "*non hercle faciet!*" The scheme is entirely successful. Mysis is

¹There is good comic effect in the fact that the old man is tricked by being oversuspicious. Cf. Donatus' comment on vs. 459: "*fallitur Simo per nimiam sagacitatem suam.*" Comic effects will be discussed more fully in a later chapter.

confused and embarrassed but the truthfulness of her denials is obvious, as Chremes reveals in asides, and as Davos had, of course, intended. Refusing to listen to Davos, who appears to see him for the first time at 783, Chremes goes into the house of Simo to break off the marriage. The ingenuity of the intriguing slave shows to good advantage in this scene. Chremes is forced into the role of eavesdropper to hear what Davos intends him to hear. What he overhears is not actuality or natural action but a preconceived fictitious arrangement which happens to represent the truth but which, as dramatic action, is trumped up to advance the plot by preventing the marriage. The role of Mysis is more effective because it is a perfectly innocent one.

It frequently happens in the scenes which contribute to the furthering of intrigue that the person overheard is aware of the eavesdropper's presence and is speaking for effect.¹ The purpose is deception, deception which is effected not so much by supplying misleading information as by creating a wrong impression. The misleading information is generally supplied directly; the eavesdropping scenes are confirmatory.

In the Persa the intrigue is directed against the pimp, Dordalus. It consists of a plan to palm off as a foreign captive the freeborn daughter of the parasite, Saturio.² After the

¹Cf. the scene just described--And. 740. Other examples are found at Amph. 300; Asin. 407; Cas. 621; 814; Cist. 305; 639; Epid. 196; Mil. 411; 486; 991; 1216; 1284; 1311; 1378; Persa 81; 549; Pseud. 960; Heaut. 730; Eun. 942; Phorm. 348; Adelph. 364. The considerable amount of this type of scene in both Plautus and Terence lends support to the assumption that it is Greek technique and not original with the Roman dramatists. It is found in eight plays of Plautus, and in five of Terence.

²Saturio was reluctant to allow his daughter to be used in this trick. Toxilus gained the father's consent in a scene in which eavesdropping plays some part. At Persa 53 the parasite appears with a long entrance monologue concerning his profession. He concludes by calling attention to the opening of the door, and Toxilus enters (81). After a two-line entrance speech, Toxilus catches sight of the parasite and says in aside: "simulabo quasi non uideam: ita adliciam uirum." Turning to the slaves within he gives detailed instructions for an elaborate feast. He hopes that the parasite, influenced by the desire to share in such a dinner, will consent to his daughter's participating in the intrigue against the pimp. The description of the dinner in prospect is sufficient to overcome Saturio's scruples in regard to his daughter.

girl has been purchased and paid for by the pimp, the father arrives on the scene and claims her as his daughter. The intriguing slave, Toxilus, presents the pimp with a forged letter in which his master recommends a hospes to his (Toxilus') hospitality. According to the letter, the hospes is bringing a girl captive from Arabia, and Toxilus is to assist in finding a buyer for her. The feigned hospes (Sagaristio) and Saturio's daughter come on stage at 549. They are aware of the presence of Toxilus and Dordalus, and their entrance dialogue, in keeping with the part they are playing, is spoken for its effect on Dordalus. Sagaristio is questioning the girl concerning her impressions of the city of Athens which she is supposedly seeing for the first time. Their dialogue continues with brief asides from the eavesdroppers until 561, at which point a 15-line conversation in aside begins between Toxilus and the pimp. Not until 576 do the four characters come together. A similar eavesdropping scene (Pseud. 960 ff.)¹ may appear to contribute little to the success of the intrigue but it creates an impression and 'first impressions are important.' Having obtained possession of the letter and token from Harpax, Pseudolus has equipped Simia to play the part of Harpax and get his master's sweetheart away from the pimp.² Pseudolus and Simia announce Ballio and eavesdrop on his two line entrance monologue (956, 57). Then at prompting from Pseudolus, Simia makes a feigned entrance, pretending to be looking for the house of Ballio. His entrance monologue (960-65) is intended for its effect on Ballio and is in keeping with the fiction that he (Simia) is Harpax, the emissary of the soldier. The interval of the entrance monologue allows opportunity for Simia's military appearance and apparent ignorance of the locality to impress themselves on Ballio and prepare his mind for the really important items in the identification, the letter and the token.³

¹This scene deviates from the normal pattern. Cf. supra, p. 17.

²For the details of Pseudolus' intrigue against the pimp see supra, p. 23.

³The eavesdropping in this scene is somewhat involved. Pseudolus and Simia eavesdrop on Ballio's entrance monologue (956 ff.); Ballio eavesdrops on Simia's feigned entrance monologue (960 ff.); Pseudolus eavesdrops throughout the scene until Ballio and Simia go into the house at 1016. In the above analy-

Eavesdropping scenes of this description (that is, when the person overheard is aware of the presence of the eavesdropper) are especially frequent in the Miles Gloriosus, in which a large amount of trickery is carried out on the stage. They contribute to the deception of Sceledrus and the soldier.¹ (a) The soldier has appointed Sceledrus guard over his sweetheart, Philocomasium. Palaestrio, the intriguing slave, has dug a hole through the party wall into her bedchamber so that Philocomasium can pass through and enjoy the company of her lover, who is a guest of the old man next door. But Sceledrus, chancing to look down through the impluvium, has caught sight of Philocomasium in her lover's arms. Palaestrio attempts to convince him that he has been mistaken. At Mil. 410 Palaestrio announces the creaking of their neighbor's door and cautions Sceledrus to be silent. Philocomasium appears from the house next door with a four-line entrance monologue (411-14). She is aware of the presence of Palaestrio and Sceledrus but pretends not to see them. Her entrance monologue, according to previous arrangement with Palaestrio, is conventional for the traveler arrived from overseas.² She bids offerings be made to Diana, who has saved her from the troubled waters of Neptune. Her purpose is to make Sceledrus believe that she is not Philocomasium but Philocomasium's twin sister, newly arrived, and with her lover, a guest of the old man next door. Sceledrus is not convinced; he lays violent hands on the girl to drag her into his master's house. But she escapes him and runs back into the house of the senex. (b) Later

sis we are interested only in Ballio's overhearing of Simia. The presence of Pseudolus as an eavesdropper enhances the atmosphere of intrigue which surrounds this scene. Advantages of eavesdropping other than that of developing the action will be discussed in a later chapter.

¹The fact that this rather unusual type of eavesdropping is employed so frequently in the Miles, and in the deception of both Sceledrus and the soldier lends some support to the argument against the contamination theory of Leo (Plaut. Forsch. 2. 178 ff.) and others. The contamination theory holds that the deception of Sceledrus and the deception of the soldier are taken from different originals. For arguments against the contamination theory see Brotherton, "The Plot of the Miles," Trans. Amer. Phil. Assoc., LV (1924), 128 ff., and Duckworth, Class. Phil., XXX (1935), 228 ff.

²Cf. the entrance monologue of Theopropides, newly arrived from abroad (Most. 348 ff.), and that of Charmides at Trin. 820 ff.

events shake the confidence of Sceledrus. Confused and frightened, and very nearly convinced that his eyes have been playing tricks on him, he remains on stage with a link monologue after the departure of Palaestrio at 480. At 486 Periplectomenus comes out, unannounced, with an angry four-line entrance monologue, pretending to be much enraged at the grave insult which has been done him in that the soldier's slave has dared to touch his guest. The senex intends his entrance monologue to be overheard by Sceledrus. Its purpose is to frighten Sceledrus and confirm the deception. (c) In the eavesdropping scene at 994 ff. the purpose is the deception of the soldier and some amusement at his expense. Palaestrio announces to the miles that Milphidippa is coming from the house, that she is to act as intermediary between her mistress and the soldier. The soldier comments favorably on her appearance (988). In her first two lines (991-92), not intended to be overheard by the eavesdroppers, Milphidippa announces that this is the place where her games are to be played, and says, referring to the eavesdroppers: "I'll pretend not to see them, and not to know that they are here." The miles cautions Palaestrio: "Be silent. Let's listen and see if she says anything about me." Then Milphidippa speaks aloud with the intention of being overheard. She pretends to be looking about for lurking spies who may try to prevent the union of her mistress with the man she loves, the soldier, Pyrgopolynices, distinguished for beauty and charm. The following verses are taken up with pleased asides from the soldier and heavy flattery from Palaestrio (999 ff.). Milphidippa speaks again at 1010, praying that she may be allowed to meet the soldier. Palaestrio comes forward to address her at 1012 and the eavesdropping ends. (d) A similar scene occurs at 1216 ff. Palaestrio announces to the soldier that Acroteleutium and her maid are approaching. They come on talking, and Milphidippa immediately catches sight of the soldier. She advises her mistress to look at him out of the corner of her eye so that he may not know that they see him. The dialogue which follows is spoken for the soldier's benefit. Acroteleutium urges in an aside (1219): "Don't spare your voice so that he may hear." Their conversation, filled with extravagant praise of the soldier and expression of her overpowering love by Acroteleutium, is received with complacent asides by Pyrgopolynices. At 1260 Acroteleutium pretends to catch sight

of the soldier for the first time, and to be overcome by her emotions. Milphidippa approaches the eavesdroppers at 1267. The purpose of the scene is to confirm the soldier in the delusion that all women, and Acroteleutium in particular, are unable to resist his charms. (e) The deception of the soldier is continued at 1284 ff. Pyrgopolynices announces the approach of a seafaring man. During the first part of his entrance monologue (1284-89) Pleusicles is unaware of the presence of the others on stage, and they do not hear his words. In the first six lines Pleusicles betrays his reluctance to take part in this masquerade but consoles himself with the thought that others have been compelled to forsake the path of honor by the power of love. In the next two lines he catches sight of the occupants of the stage and realizes that he must change his tone. The last six lines are spoken for the benefit of the soldier and are in keeping with the role which Pleusicles is playing, that of a shipmaster coming to conduct Philocomasium to her mother. (f) Palaestrio is sent to bring the girl from the house while Pyrgopolynices and Pleusicles wait on the stage. Palaestrio returns with Philocomasium at 1311 and their entrance dialogue is meant to be overheard by the soldier. Philocomasium's tears are emphasized and the grief which she pretends at being compelled to leave the miles. At 1378 the three-line entrance monologue of the puer is addressed to those within but is meant to be overheard by the soldier. The puer has been sent to find the soldier and hasten his coming into the house. His entrance monologue stresses the eagerness with which Acroteleutium awaits the presence of the miles.¹

In the Asinaria Leonida's three-line entrance monologue (407-409) serves to create a false impression, to confirm a false identification (cf. Mil. 1284 ff.). Libanus and the mercator are on stage. It is necessary that the mercator accept Leonida as Saurea if the two intriguing slaves are to get the money which he carries. Leonida has already in a former meeting identified himself to the mercator as Saurea. Libanus announces

¹These last two scenes (f and g) are of no great consequence as far as the success of the intrigue is concerned. Merely by way of cumulative effect they add confirmation to an impression which is already firmly established. For the use of the puer scene (1378) to facilitate change of roles see Prescott, Harv. Stud. Class. Phil., XXI (1910), 34-36.

him to the mercator as Saurea and he comes on talking in the character of Saurea, pretending not to see the two on stage. The aside of the mercator (410) shows that he is impressed and Libanus' aside is in keeping with the role he is playing, that of a slave dominated by the atriensis. At Epid. 181 Apocides and Periphanes are engaged in dialogue when the intriguing slave, Epidicus, comes on stage from the house of Chaeribulus. The old men fail to perceive him or hear his entrance monologue (181-88), and they continue their dialogue. Epidicus hears that they are planning to have his young master take a wife, and that they have discovered that the young man has been devoting himself to a music girl.¹ Apparently deriving some inspiration from this conversation, Epidicus says (192 ff.) in aside: "di hercle omnes adiuvant, augent, amant: ipsi hi quidem mihi dant viam, quo pacto ab se argentum auferam." And arranging his dress as if after a long hard run, he makes a feigned entrance with a five-line speech (196-200) fashioned after the conventional servus currens monologue. He pretends to have just come from the forum in great haste to find his master, Periphanes.² Geta and Phormio stage a scene (Phorm. 348 ff.) in order to give a false impression and keep up the deception of the senex. During the absence of Demipho, Phormio has carried out a scheme by which Antipho was enabled to marry the girl he loves. Assuming the role of protector of the girl, Phormio charged that Antipho was her next of kin and brought suit against him to compel him to marry her. Antipho's father has returned and the young man is frightened by the prospect of parental wrath and by the thought that he may lose his new bride. It is desirable that Demipho be convinced that his son has married the girl only because he has been compelled by law. At 348 Phormio and Geta see the old man approaching, accompanied by advocati, and hearing his two-line entrance speech, Geta comments in aside: "He's

¹A deviation from the conventional form in that the over-hearing is done by the entering character. Cf. supra, p. 18.

²There are really two eavesdropping scenes described here, one of which leads to the other. Epidicus apparently gets the germ of an idea for an intrigue from the conversation which he overhears. The old men are forced to become eavesdroppers in the second scene and to hear what Epidicus intends them to hear. His feigned servus currens monologue is intended to impress the old men with the need for haste in carrying out the plan which he unfolds to them. Cf. Duckworth, op. cit., p. 219.

angry." Phormio determines to concentrate the old man's anger on himself. As if he has just learned that Demipho is opposed to his son's marriage, and that he denies kinship with the girl, Phormio begins to abuse the old man (351 ff.) with accusations of avarice and snobbery. Geta takes up the cudgels in his master's defense. Demipho overhears them, as they intend, and his anger is somewhat diverted from Geta and Antipho and directed more particularly against Phormio. Demipho gets the impression that Geta and his son are innocent victims of circumstances, and that Phormio is responsible for the intrigue.¹

B

The following eavesdropping scenes have no direct bearing on intrigue although some of them occur in comedies in which intrigue plays a part. However, they add complications of various sorts and of varying degrees of importance to the plot.

In the Aulularia the principal interest is in the characterization of the miserly old Euclio. The chief feature of the characterization is the anxiety which the old man feels for the safety of a pot of gold which he has discovered hidden under his hearth. Two eavesdropping scenes are instrumental in bringing about the loss of the pot of gold. The two scenes are similar in technique² and the same characters are involved in each. It is the wedding day of Euclio's daughter. The old man comes home to find his house filled with cooks and cook's helpers, engaged by his prospective son-in-law. Fearful for the safety of his gold, Euclio carries it from the house and, after some deliberation, decides to hide it in the temple of Fides (582 ff.). As he leaves the stage, a slave belonging to Lyconides enters with a 20-line monologue (587-607) in the course of which he explains his motive for spying on Euclio's house. His master is in love with Euclio's daughter, who is to be married to Megadorus, and the slave has been sent to watch the house and see what goes on there. Thus he is in a position to hear and see Euclio as he

¹We are here concerned with Demipho's overhearing of Geta and Phormio, not the fact that they overhear his two-line entrance speech. The scene deviates from the conventional form of eavesdropping in that the entering character becomes the eavesdropper. Cf. supra, p. 17.

²Deviations from the normal pattern. Cf. supra, p. 14.

comes out of the temple (608) and goes toward his own door, addressing an 8-line monologue to Fides warning her not to betray the pot of gold which he has hidden in her temple. As Euclio leaves the stage (615), the slave comes forward with exclamations of surprise and joy, and announces his intention of going into the temple to search for the gold. But before he can discover the hiding place the suspicious old man returns (624) and hurries into the temple again (627). The slave is driven out and subjected to a thorough quizzing and search. Finding him empty handed, Euclio orders the slave off the premises and goes back into the temple (660). The slave holds the stage with a short link monologue, announces Euclio coming from the temple, and conceals himself near the entrance for a second eavesdropping scene. Euclio comes out with a 10-line entrance-exit monologue (667-76) in which he rebukes Faith for her faithlessness, and decides to hide his gold in the grove of Silvanus. The slave comes out of his hiding-place with a short exultant monologue, declaring that he will get there first, climb a tree, and see where the old man hides his gold. He is successful in this attempt as we learn from his entrance monologue at 701 ff.

The eavesdropping scene at Rud. 559 ff. is more closely connected with the plot of the comedy. Labrax and Charmides are on stage, both wet and miserable from the shipwreck, Labrax bemoaning the fact that he has lost all his possessions in the sea. He concludes his speech (552) with: "If only the girls were safe, there would be some hope." At this point Sceparnio comes out of the temple with an excited four-line entrance monologue (559-62), from which Labrax learns that two women, shipwrecked during the night, have taken refuge there. After getting confirmation by eager questioning, Labrax hastens into the temple. The discovery of the whereabouts of the girls is of immediate importance to Labrax. It has more far reaching importance in that as a result of Labrax' attack on the girls inside the temple, Daemones is brought more directly into the plot. Thus the girls are under his protection when the opportunity arrives for identifying his daughter. In an eavesdropping scene¹ in Andria (416-24) Byrrria gains information which causes a tem-

¹A deviation from the normal pattern. Cf. supra, p. 16.

porary complication in the secondary plot,¹ a complication which is cleared up when Pamphilus and Charinus meet. Davos has obtained Pamphilus' reluctant compliance in a scheme by which he hopes to throw the old man off guard. According to this scheme Pamphilus is to give apparent consent to the marriage which his father has arranged, a marriage which Davos is confident will not take place because Chremes will not give his daughter to a man who keeps a mistress. At 403 Davos warns that the old man is coming. Simo comes on with one line, possibly overheard but of no consequence. The next seven lines are taken up with dialogue between Davos and Pamphilus, of whose presence Simo is apparently unaware. At 412 Byrria comes on with a four-line entrance monologue, unseen and unheard by any of the three occupants of the stage. Byrria's entrance and subsequent eaves-dropping are motivated in much the same way as that of the slave of Lyconides in the Aulularia (cf. supra, p. 35). His master is in love with the girl whom Pamphilus is being forced to marry, and Byrria has been sent to keep watch on Pamphilus and see what is being done about the marriage. At 416 Simo catches sight of Davos and Pamphilus and conversation develops between them. According to the plan which Davos had devised, Pamphilus makes no protest but acquiesces in his father's bidding that he make ready to marry that day. The listening Byrria overhears Pamphilus' promise to comply with his father's wishes, and departs, unnoticed, with a seven-line exit monologue (425-31) to carry the unwelcome news to his master. At And. 228 Mysis comes on stage with a short entrance monologue, from which we learn that she has been sent to summon the obstetrix for her young mistress. Seeing Pamphilus approaching in a state of great excitement, she

¹Cf. Donatus ad And. 412. "ad hoc uenit Byrria, ut in errorem concitet Charinum." This is not the error fabulae, or the fundamental error of the Andria but one of the errores minores. Cf. Smith, op. cit., p. 10. "Error, or error fabulae, is the misapprehension or intellectual mistake arising out of some fact concealed during the complication of the drama and upon which the complication depends. There may be other errores, i.e., errores minores or mistakes, arising out of the error fabulae or, conceivably, from some other source. Not to be confused with the fundamental error and the mistakes growing out of it are the mystifications which arise in the deluding of one or more of the agents through the scheming of the intriguer. Donatus applies the term error to all these forms of ignorance. The fundamental error in the Andria is the misapprehension regarding the free birth of Glycerium."

decides to wait and see what the trouble is. Eavesdropping with worried asides from 236 to 264 she learns that Pamphilus' father has ordered him to marry today and that he is confused and uncertain whether to obey or oppose his father. Remarking that the wavering mind is easily influenced one way or another, Mysis comes forward to strengthen the young man's will to resist and obtain his pledge to remain faithful to her mistress.

In the Menaechmi three eavesdropping scenes in which a stolen mantle plays a part add to the complications arising out of the confusion in identity of the two brothers. (a) The parasite, Peniculus, comes on stage with a long monologue (77-109), which he concludes with an announcement that Menaechmus is coming from the house. Menaechmus stops in the doorway to direct a storm of abuse (110-25) at his wife, who is within. In an aside (125-26) Peniculus comments on one piece of information which does not please him: Menaechmus is not going to dine at home. Menaechmus continues with his entrance monody, rejoicing that his tirade has at last driven his wife from the door, and that he has escaped with a stolen mantle. At this point (135) Peniculus hails him, seeking a share in the prize. The monody of Menaechmus serves chiefly to throw light on an unpleasant domestic situation, which is in keeping with the convention of comedy.¹ But the knowledge of the stolen mantle, of which Peniculus learned in the eavesdropping scene, will prove a source of embarrassment to Menaechmus later. (b) The parasite is again the eavesdropper in the second scene (466-85). He comes on at 446 with a 20-line entrance monologue, filled with disgust at himself for losing sight of Menaechmus and missing a dinner. He is still hoping to be in time for the leavings when he sees Menaechmus II coming out of the courtesan's house. The parasite mistakes him for his patron, Menaechmus I, and concludes rightly that the dinner is over. Menaechmus II assures Erotium that he will carry the mantle to the embroiderer and bring it safely back (466-68). Peniculus comments on this speech in an aside (469-72) and threatens to have revenge because he has missed his dinner. Menaechmus II moves away from the door and continues his entrance monologue, speaking to himself or to the audience (473-77). Peniculus is unable to hear

¹Cf. Most. 690 ff.; Trin. 39 ff.

distinctly, as he informs us in an aside (478-79),¹ and at 486 he goes forward to accuse Menaechmus II of cheating him out of a meal. Receiving no satisfaction from that gentleman, Peniculus departs with threats of revenge (521). He goes to the house of Menaechmus I to inform the latter's wife of the facts which he has learned in the two eavesdropping scenes. In the first scene he learned of the stolen mantle; in the second he overheard the person whom he mistook for Menaechmus I promising to have the mantle altered and returned to Erotium. (c) In the third eavesdropping scene (571-603) the parasite and matrona eavesdrop on Menaechmus I. Menaechmus' entrance monody is divided into two parts, the evils of the client system (571-87), and disgust at himself for the manner in which he has spent the day (588-601). The first part contains no pertinent information for the eavesdroppers, but in the second part, mention of a luncheon prepared, a mistress waiting, and a stolen mantle, is sufficient to condemn in the eyes of his wife and to confirm the accusation of the parasite. To Peniculus' question the wife answers that she hears plainly what her husband is saying (603), and she calls to Menaechmus as he is on the point of entering the house of Erotium.²

3. Discovery and Resolution

Eavesdropping seems an obvious and convenient method for

¹Cf. Brix-Niemeyer, Menaechmi (6th ed.; Leipzig: 1929), n. on 473 ff. "Mit diesen Worten schreitet Menaechmus die Bühne hinab weit fort vom Peniculus, so dass dieser nur den Anfang noch einigermaßen hören kann; denn hätte er 480 ff. verstanden, so wäre die Verwechslung zu früh entdeckt worden." Cf. also Langen, "Plautinische Studien," Berliner Studien V (1886), I, 150-51.

²Despite the matrona's assertion that she hears plainly, it is probable that she does not hear the first part of her husband's speech. There is nothing in it which is of importance to her. And it is probable that she does not hear all the details of the second part which do not agree with the facts as the parasite has told them to her. The overhearing of a few isolated words at the end of the entrance monologue is more likely. Cf. Brix-Niemeyer, op. cit., n. on 598, and Langen, op. cit., p. 303. ". . . aber erst bei diesen Worten ist Menächmus in die Nähe der Beiden gekommen und mit Rücksicht auf die Frau lässt nun die Dichter ihn noch einige Worte hinzufügen, welche ihn aus seinen eigenen Munde des Diebstahls überführen, so dass seine Frau das unredliche Benehmen ihres Mannes nicht bloss durch die leidenschaftliche Anklage des Parasiten erfährt." Cf. also Langen, op. cit., p. 152, and for the content of the monody Fraenkel, op. cit., pp. 159 ff.

the discovery of error and intrigue. But the comic dramatist rarely employs it for this purpose. Discovery of error is most often brought about by means of birth tokens, swaddling clothes, rings and other material objects.¹ Discovery of intrigue is effected by direct testimony or by the admission of the guilty person. Scenes in which discovery is made frequently open with eavesdropping but the eavesdropping contributes little or nothing to the discovery.² Adjustment of minor difficulties is occasionally accomplished through information received in eavesdropping. Discovery of the fundamental error is never entirely dependent on eavesdropping.

Diabolus and his parasite are the discovering agents in the Asinaria. The intrigue is revealed to Artemona by direct testimony of the parasite but the information is confirmed in an eavesdropping scene (882 ff.).³ The eavesdropping scene leads directly to peripety. The intrigue is instigated by the senex, who sides with his son against a domineering wife and mother. The mother holds the family purse strings. The old man is instrumental in obtaining 20 minas to pay the lena and assist his son in a love-affair. But the senex stipulates that as a reward he be given a share in the first night's entertainment. At 745 the young lover and his sweetheart go into the lena's house, where the entertainment is to take place. The old man is already within, having gone in the back way (741). At 746 another lover, Diabolus, comes on the scene with his parasite. They discuss the terms of a contract which they have prepared engaging

¹Cf. Smith, op. cit., p. 59.

²In a scene beginning at Pseud. 1103 Harpax, Ballio, and Simo learn that they are the victims of Pseudolus' intrigue. Ballio and Simo are heldover characters. Ballio has informed Simo that Harpax (the pseudo-Harpax) has taken off the girl and the two old men are congratulating themselves on the failure of Pseudolus' plot. At 1103 the real Harpax returns, as discovering agent, with an entrance monody of 20 lines. The eavesdroppers either do not hear Harpax' entrance speech, or they misinterpret what they do hear. Ballio learns only that the man has money and is in search of a girl; as such a man the stranger is the lawful prize of a pimp. Discovery is not made until the three characters are brought together for dialogue. Eavesdropping is merely the means of bringing the characters together; it contributes nothing to the discovery.

³A deviation from the normal pattern. The entering characters become eavesdroppers. Cf. supra, pp. 18-19.

the girl's favors for a year's time. They apparently enter the lena's house at 809 and come out at 810.¹ During this interval Diabolus learns that Demaenetus has supplied the money for the young man's love-affair, and he has perhaps discovered the senex enjoying the company of the girl. Fired with thoughts of revenge, Diabolus is on the point of going to inform Artemona of her husband's truancy, but he is checked by the parasite, who suggests that he himself, an uninterested party, is the proper person to inform Artemona. The pair leave the stage at 827 and from 828 to 850 the audience hears and perhaps sees the two young lovers and the senex at the banquet table.² At 851 Artemona appears, expressing her surprise and indignation at such actions on the part of her husband, while the parasite attempts to add fuel to her anger. He leads her to a point from which they can spy on the banquet scene and with a dramatic: "There's your man!" he points out Demaenetus. The parasite suggests that

¹It is possible that Diabolus and the parasite do not actually enter the lena's house but merely look in at the open door. If they do go in, which seems more likely, their stay is brief. The effect of the contrasting moods with which they enter and come out of the lena's house is lessened if the interval is of considerable length. A few words with the lena and a rapid survey of the scene within are sufficient to acquaint Diabolus with the facts. Cf. Conrad, op. cit., p. 77.

²Our first impression is that this scene was staged inside the house. Certainly the dramatist takes some pains to create the illusion that it is an inside scene. The fact is emphasized that Demaenetus is inside (741), and the two young lovers go in at 745 to take part in the evening's entertainment. Diabolus and the parasite encounter the party when they go in, or look in the door at 809. But the banquet scene does not begin until after Diabolus and the parasite have left the stage (827). The older view that such scenes as Most. 157; 307, Stich. 88, and the present one could not have been staged outside, that they must have been acted inside and seen through the open door, or that the eccyclema or exostra was employed, has now been discredited. For the older view cf. Bethe, Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Theaters in Altertum (Leipzig: 1895), 311; Wageningen, Scaenica Romana (Groningen: 1907), 5, 14; Ahrens, De Plauti Asinaria (Jena: 1907), 23-24; Wilamowitz, Euripides Herakles (2d ed.; Berlin: 1895), II, 7. Wilamowitz says that Demophilus must have used the eccyclema in the Onagos whether the Roman translator did or not. For the more recent view which places such scenes 'ante ostium' or within the πρόθυρον or promenade porch, see Lundström, Eranos (1896), 95 ff.; Kelley Rees, op. cit.; Dalman, op. cit., pp. 22 ff.; Flickinger, The Greek Theater and Its Drama (4th ed.; Chicago: 1936), 238.

they listen secretly from ambush to catch what is going on, and immediately the conversation at the table, which had lapsed for 31 lines, begins again (882). For 27 lines Artemona listens with frequent angry asides to her husband's love-making, after which she rushes in to attack him with angry words (909). Artemona leads her husband home, and the two young lovers are left to enjoy each other's society in peace.¹

Two eavesdropping scenes in the Cistellaria play a part in the discovery of the fundamental error. The error consists of the misapprehension as to the free birth of Selenium.² Selenium is the free-born daughter of Phanostrata, who caused her to be exposed.³ The slave, Lampadio, having abandoned the child, lurked about to see what would happen. He saw a certain courtesan pick up and carry off the foundling. Having a child of her own, the courtesan gave the infant to another courtesan, Melaenis. Phanostrata is now eager to find her daughter, and the slave, Lampadio, is engaged in a search for the courtesan whom he saw carrying off the girl. Melaenis, the foster-mother of Selenium, is the eavesdropper in the first scene (536-96). She holds the stage with a long monologue (528 ff.) and announces the approach of Lampadio, who comes on running but without the usual servus currens monologue. At the end of his seven-line entrance monologue (536-42), Phanostrata enters and dialogue follows between her and Lampadio. Listening with agitated asides, Melaenis hears Lampadio tell Phanostrata that he has found the old woman who picked up her abandoned child. He had mistaken the grown daughter of the courtesan for the foundling but the courtesan had assured him that she had given the child to another woman, Melaenis. Thus Melaenis learns that the child which she has been rearing as her own is the daughter of Phanostrata. After the departure of Phanostrata (596), Melaenis comes forward to get more detailed information by questioning Lampadio. Melaenis decides that it will be to her

¹There is considerable comic effect in Artemona's witnessing her husband's love-making and hearing his disparaging remarks about herself.

²Cf. Smith, op. cit., p. 14.

³For the action prior to the opening of the play cf. Fields, op. cit., pp. 53-56.

advantage to bring Selenium and present her to her real mother. However she does not give herself away to Lampadio. In the second eavesdropping scene (671-704) Lampadio and Phanostrata are the eavesdroppers. Melaenis and Selenium, accompanied by the maid, Halisca, come on the stage at 631. Halisca is carrying the casket of trinkets which had been discovered with the foundling. It is Melaenis' intention to turn Selenium over to her mother, but that purpose is frustrated for the moment by the arrival of Alcesimarchus, who appears to be on the point of committing suicide.¹ Alcesimarchus carries Selenium off into his house; Melaenis and Halisca follow. In the excitement Halisca drops the casket, and Lampadio, coming on stage at 653, discovers it. Phanostrata, appearing shortly afterwards (658), recognizes the casket and the birth tokens. While Lampadio and Phanostrata are examining the tokens Halisca returns to look for them. From her entrance monody (671-704), filled with distress and anxiety, the eavesdroppers learn that she is the person that lost the casket. But information of greater importance, the whereabouts of the lost daughter, is obtained from the questioning which follows when Phanostrata calls to the maid at 704.² Similarly in an eavesdropping scene in the Poenulus (961-93) Hanno receives some indication of the whereabouts of his lost daughters³ but the more important information comes in the conversation which follows the eavesdropping. Hanno comes on the stage at 930, and from his entrance monologue we learn that he is seeking his daughters and his brother's son. He concludes his entrance speech with an announcement of Agorastocles and Milphio, who come on stage from the house. Their entrance dialogue (961 ff.) is concerned with two freeborn girls, stolen from Carthage, the significance of which Hanno appreciates in a four-line aside (967-70).⁴ The two catch sight of Hanno at 977,

¹Cf. infra, p. 58, n. 2.

²Birth tokens are involved in an eavesdropping scene in the Rudens, if Rud. 906 ff. is an eavesdropping scene (cf. supra, p. 20). Trachalio's interference, as a result of the eavesdropping, puts the trunk into the hands of Daemones. The trunk contains the tokens which identify his daughter.

³For the presuppositions of the Poenulus cf. Fields, op. cit., pp. 56-62.

⁴According to Fraenkel (op. cit., p. 220) there is evi-

and they discuss his strange appearance but do not speak directly to him until 994. During this conversation Hanno learns further that Agorastocles was stolen from Carthage at the age of six, information which Hanno comments on in another aside (988-89).

After the main conflict in the Andria has been resolved by the discovery of the fundamental error, the secondary plot is resolved as a result of an eavesdropping scene (957-74).¹ At 957 Charinus enters, unannounced, with one line and catches sight of Pamphilus. Pamphilus fails to notice Charinus and continues his link monologue, rousing Charinus' curiosity by his expressions of joy. Pamphilus concludes his speech with an announcement of Davos, and from the dialogue which develops between the two, Charinus learns that Glycerium has been discovered to be the daughter of Chremes and that Pamphilus is to be allowed to marry her. As a result Charinus has hopes of marrying the other daughter of Chremes, who had been intended for Pamphilus.² Similarly in the Eunuchus the details of the discovery and resolution of the main plot are presented to the secondary characters through eavesdropping (1031-60).³ Parmeno holds the stage with a link monologue of one line (1024), and Thraso and Gnatho enter at 1025 with six lines of dialogue, which they conclude with an announcement of Chaerea. Parmeno fails to notice the miles and his parasite but he hears and comments in aside (1034) on the three-line entrance monologue of Chaerea. Dialogue follows between Parmeno and Chaerea and the eavesdroppers learn that Pamphila has been discovered to be the sister of Chremes, that she has been betrothed to Chaerea, that Thais has put herself under the protection of Iaches, the father of Chaerea and Phaedria, that Phaedria is now the accepted lover of Thais, and that the miles is to be cast off. Thraso's aside (1043) shows

dence of Plautine expansion in this aside. The first two lines are from the original, but the last two are Plautine and characteristic of Plautus' lack of taste.

¹A deviation from the normal pattern. Cf. supra, p. 16.

²In his comment on verse 957 Donatus says: "haec scaena alterum generum Chremeti comparat, ne aut Charinus tristis recedat aut non provius videatur Philumenae." He says further: "hoc colloquium propter compendium fabulae inducitur, ut una narratione etiam negotium Charini transigi possit."

³A deviation from the normal pattern. Cf. supra, p. 16.

that he is aware of the significance which these facts have for him. The eavesdropping continues while Chaerea dispatches Parmeno to find his brother. Chaerea holds the stage with a link monologue and listens to his brother's brief entrance monologue. Dialogue begins between them but is carried on for only two lines. The eavesdroppers have nothing more to learn. The following eight lines are taken up with their conversation in aside, which finally betrays them to Phaedria (1060). Drawing Phaedria aside, Gnatho makes the best terms he can for Thais on behalf of the miles.¹ In the Rudens, after the solution of the main conflict, the difficulties of Labrax and Gripus are resolved as a result of eavesdropping. The pimp, Labrax, comes on the stage at 1281 with a seven-line entrance monologue, complaining that he has lost Palaestra to Plesidippus through the decision of the court. Gripus enters at 1288, soliloquizing bitterly because he has been deprived of the trunk which he fished up from the sea (cf. 906 ff.). Labrax is roused to excited interest by the mention of a trunk full of gold and silver fished up from the sea, and he comes forward to question Gripus (1003). He obtains confirmatory information in the dialogue which follows. In return for an offer of a reward Gripus promises to aid Labrax in the recovery of the trunk. He summons his master to the stage and in the action which follows Labrax gets the trunk and Gripus gets his freedom.²

In the Truculentus the plot contains three intrigues, directed by the courtesan, Phronesium, against her three lovers. Discovery of her intrigue against Diniarchus is made by the dupe in an eavesdropping scene (775-826). Her intrigue against the soldier is also involved. Phronesium pretends to Diniarchus

¹It is apparent that the eavesdroppers are brought on to the stage, interrupting the normal entrance sequence, for the purpose of resolving the plot completely for all parties. Cf. Donatus ad 1034: "inuenta persona est, propter quam gesta hic narrat Chaerea, ut et populus et miles instruantur et sciant, quid intus gestum sit."

Similarly, in the Pericliromene Moschion, eavesdropping (344-95) on the long conversation of Glycera and Pataecus, learns the details of the discovery.

²Note the resemblance of this eavesdropping scene to an earlier one in the same play (559-62). In both cases the dramatist allows Labrax to get the significant fact by overhearing. Confirmation is obtained by direct questioning. Cf. also Poen. 961 ff.; Cist. 536 ff., and 671 ff. for similar method.

that she is devoted to him alone and gains his acquiescence in her intrigue against the soldier. This intrigue consists of palming off a child brought in from outside as her own and the soldier's. Diniarchus does not know that the child is his own, the result of an indiscretion with the daughter of Callicles, whom he was at one time supposed to marry. Holding the stage with a link monologue (758 ff.), Diniarchus announces the approach of Callicles, leading two slave girls in bonds. The young man fears that his misdeed has been detected. Crouching against the wall, he listens with agitated asides as Callicles extracts the truth from the slave girls (775 ff.). He hears that the child born to the daughter of Callicles has been handed over to Phronesium, who is palming it off as her own, and he hears himself named as the father of the child. At this point (825) Diniarchus reveals himself to Callicles, begging forgiveness and promising to marry the girl whom he has wronged. He also promises to get his child, Callicles' grandson, back from Phronesium.¹

¹There is little or no actual eavesdropping at Phorm. 728. Chremes has a one-line link monologue and Sophrona enters, unannounced with a four-line entrance monologue. In a query addressed to himself (732) Chremes ponders on the identity of the old woman. As Sophrona continues her entrance monologue Chremes' asides indicate a dawning recognition of the old woman rather than any understanding of her remarks. Contact and recognition between Chremes and Sophrona is essential for the discovery of the error, misapprehension concerning the identity of Antipho's wife. The eavesdropping makes little contribution to the recognition. For a similar scene cf. Epid. 526.

CHAPTER IV

EAVESDROPPING IN RELATION TO THE MINOR FEATURES OF THE PLOT

The most obvious use of eavesdropping as a dramatic device is to furnish information to the eavesdropper. There are a few scenes in which the information provided is of only minor significance. It is of interest and importance to the eavesdropper but has no effect on the major complication or dénouement. The information is of immediate value only; its effect on the action is usually not felt beyond the scene in which the eavesdropping takes place. Even when no information is provided the eavesdropping may furnish some worthwhile dramatic effect. The presence of the eavesdropper sometimes stimulates the interest of the audience and has an enlivening effect on the situation. The dramatic value of the eavesdropping consists in the development of momentary effects of surprise, fear, suspense, and, in general, emotional upset. The asides of the eavesdropper, revealing such emotions, arouse the same feelings among the spectators with dramatic effect. The arousing of the emotions of fear, joy, and suspense, the reversal of fear to joy, is sometimes accomplished through errores minores developed by eavesdropping.¹

1. Eavesdropping as a Device for Furnishing Information of Immediate Value Only

In the Pseudolus the intriguing slave eavesdrops on the

¹Cf. supra, p. 37, n. 1. Ancient critics believed that an accumulation of errores (i.e., of minor misapprehensions during the complication) enhanced the value of dramatic action, and that an emotional reversal of fear to joy in the minor phases of the action contributed to the dramatic value--all this quite distinct from the dramatic value of the major error in the plot and from the major reversal of fear to joy which always accompanies the discovery of the major error. Cf. Donatus ad Phorm. 606. "ad errorem cumulandum persona Antiphonis interponitur utque ei adaucto metu amittendae uxoris maior fiat repentinae repetitio laetitiae."

entrance dialogue (415-44) of Simo and Callipho. Pseudolus concludes a link monologue with the announcement of the approach of his master and Callipho. "From this old tomb," he says, speaking of his master, "I'll dig out 20 minas to-day, which I'll give to my young master."¹ Now I'll step back here and pick up their conversation." He eavesdrops with frequent asides and his final aside (443-44) calls attention to his presence. The entrance dialogue serves to portray the characters by contrast of the two old men, and the asides of Pseudolus, emphasizing the mild disposition of Callipho, assist in this portrayal. From the seven-line entrance speech (415-21) which Simo makes to Callipho, Pseudolus learns that the senex is aware of his son's love affair and is on his guard against being tricked out of money. In his first aside (422-26)² Pseudolus comments on the fact that the difficulty of his task is increased because the old man has been forewarned.³ However, the value of the information is discounted because Simo proceeds to inform Pseudolus of these very facts in the conversation which follows (481). But there is some advantage in knowing in advance of an accusation which is to be brought against one. Perhaps also the knowledge of Callipho's easy-going disposition lent some encouragement to Pseudolus in the encounter and bargaining which took

¹For the details of Pseudolus' plan of intrigue see supra, pp. 23-24.

²Fraenkel (op. cit., 214-15) sees evidence of Plautine expansion in this aside. According to Fraenkel the first line and a half belong to the original; the last three lines are Plautine. Callipho's reply (427) to Simo's entrance speech is too long delayed by an aside of four and one-half lines.

³This aside seemingly indicates that Pseudolus learns now for the first time that Simo is aware of his son's love affair, and is on his guard against the machinations of Pseudolus. This is in apparent contradiction to lines 406-408, in which Pseudolus says that Simo has somehow got wind of the plot. These lines at 406-408 are rejected by many authorities. Cf. Ledewig, Philol., XVII (1861), 456; Lorenz, Philol., XXXV (1867), 172; Langen, op. cit., pp. 358 ff.; Schmidt, De Pseudoli Plautinae Exemplo Attico (Strassburg: 1909), 21; Coulter, Retractatio in Plautus (Bryn Mawr: 1911), 76. Bierma's explanation (Quaest. de Plaut. Pseud. [Groningen: 1897], 38-39) that Pseudolus saw by the facial expression of the approaching Simo that he was aware of the situation is not convincing. Hough (The Composition of the Pseudolus [Princeton: 1931], 64 ff.) argues with some plausibility that these lines refer to an earlier situation in which Pseudolus had attempted to trick his master and failed because the old man had prematurely discovered the plot.

place between Simo and himself. As the result of an eavesdropping scene at Most. 1064-74 Tranio has the advantage of being forewarned when he steps out to meet his master. Tranio comes on the stage at 1041 with an extended monologue of encouragement to himself, knowing that his intrigue is soon to be discovered. At 1062 he announces his master by a reference to the creaking door and decides to eavesdrop. Theopropides comes out of the house speaking to the slaves within, instructing them to rush out with handcuffs and shackles when Tranio appears. "res palam est," says Tranio in an aside (1068).¹ He comes forward to meet his master with his usual impudence and, being on guard as a result of his eavesdropping, he stays close to the altar, to which he retires for protection at the critical moment.² A scene of similar value occurs in the Mercator. While his wife is in the country, Lysimachus has agreed to keep his neighbor's prospective mistress at his house. Lysimachus returns from the forum with a short entrance monologue (692-99), from which it appears that he intends to join his neighbor in the celebration. He has purchased provisions and hired a cook. To his surprise he sees his door opening, and his wife, unexpectedly returned from the country, coming from the house. From her first words (700 ff.) Lysimachus suspects that she has discovered the girl whom he agreed to keep for Demipho and that she has put the obvious construction on it. Unable to hear to his satisfaction, he moves nearer, and finding his fears confirmed, he at least has the advantage of being forewarned when he steps up to greet his wife. At And. 590 ff. Davos is informed by Simo that Chremes has agreed to the marriage of his daughter with Pamphilus. Davos' whole scheme is frustrated by this announcement. The success of his intrigue rested on the assumption that Chremes would persist in his refusal to such a match.³ Holding

¹This eavesdropping scene has no value as a means of discovery. The major discovery (i.e., the discovery of the intrigue) has already occurred. In this scene Tranio learns that the discovery has been made by Theopropides.

²There is considerable comic effect in lines 1069 ff. in which Theopropides promises to take Tranio by surprise, to conceal the hook and let out the line gradually, to pretend ignorance of the whole affair.

³For the details of Davos' intrigue see supra, p. 37.

the stage with a link monologue (599-606) after the departure of Simo, Davos anticipates the punishment which he is sure to receive from Pamphilus. Pamphilus appears at 607, and his entrance monologue consists mainly of imprecations against Davos, who advised him to consent to the marriage. Davos eavesdrops with frequent asides. He learns that Pamphilus is already aware of the failure of Davos' intrigue, and that Pamphilus holds him responsible for the present difficulty. Davos gains some time to prepare himself for the attack which comes after Pamphilus catches sight of him at 616.

In the Miles Palaestrio learns from Periplectomenus (173 ff.) that someone of his fellow-slaves has caught sight of Philocomasium and her lover kissing each other.¹ Remaining on stage with a link monologue (259-71) Palaestrio declares his intention of discovering the identity of this fellow-slave. He concludes with an announcement of Sceledrus, Philocomasium's guard, and from his three-line entrance monologue (272-74) he learns that Sceledrus is the slave in question. However, he learns only that which Sceledrus attempts with some difficulty to tell him in the conversation which follows. In a short link monologue at Cas. 303 ff. Lysidamus expresses the fear that his wife will prevail upon Olympio to abandon his suit for Casina, in which case she will be lost to Lysidamus and the only course open to him will be suicide. At 308 he announces Olympio as coming from the house and overhears his determined resistance to the persuasions of Cleustrata (309-17), as she follows him to the door. Lysidamus shows his relief in an aside: "saluos sum, salua spes est, ut uerba audio." The information is confirmed in the dialogue which follows between himself and Olympio. In the Mercator Demipho and Lysimachus appear (957) engaged in dialogue, during the course of which Lysimachus reveals that his wife is very angry because of the girl whom she found in her house. At 961 Lysimachus announces that his son is coming from the house and, overhearing the one-line entrance monologue (962), is delighted to learn that his wife's anger has been allayed.

¹For a fuller account of the situation cf. supra, p. 31.

2. Eavesdropping as a Means of Developing Momentary
Effects of Surprise, Fear, Joy,
Suspense, and Emotional Upset

At Phorm. 567 Demipho and Chremes come on the stage engaged in entrance dialogue. Geta enters, unannounced and unheard, with a 15-line entrance monologue, during the course of which he discovers the presence of Demipho and Chremes. At the conclusion of Geta's monologue (605) Antipho appears, unannounced and unheard, with a three-line entrance monologue, looking for Geta. He sees the three characters on stage and eavesdrops on the conversation which develops as Geta goes forward to greet the two senes (609).¹ Antipho's asides reveal surprise, fear, and anger, as he hears Geta unfolding a plan by which Phormio may be induced to take back the girl whom Antipho has married contrary to his father's wishes.² Demipho and Chremes depart at 681 and Antipho comes forward with angry words for Geta. However, Geta assures him that the plan will not be carried out beyond the point of getting money with which to pay Phormio. Antipho's suspense is immediately relieved and his fear changed to joy.³ In the same manner an eavesdropping scene at Heaut. 242-56 serves to develop an error minor. Fear and anxiety are created by the misinterpretation of conversation overheard by the eavesdropping lover, but fear is changed to joy by the discovery of the error. Clinia has returned from abroad and is eager to see his sweetheart. He is already somewhat fearful that she has not remained faithful to him. The two slaves, Syrus and Dromo have been sent to summon the lady. From their entrance dialogue (242 ff.) Clinia learns that his sweetheart is on her way to him and his anxiety is changed to joy. But the

¹A deviation from the normal pattern. Cf. supra, p. 16.

²Cf. supra, p. 34.

³Cf. supra, p. 47, n. 1, and Donatus ad 606. The primary purpose of having Antipho overhear this conversation is to increase his fear of losing his wife and to effect a reversal of fear to joy by the removal of the misapprehension. Fear itself has dramatic value, and the reversal of fear to joy has greater dramatic value.

Perhaps dramatic economy is also involved as a secondary purpose in this eavesdropping. Antipho learns of the proposed intrigue through eavesdropping and the dramatist is spared the necessity of repetition.

joyous mood is abruptly changed when he hears from the conversation between the two slaves that a train of baggage is coming, and slaves loaded with jewels and dresses. Only by being unfaithful to him could his mistress have acquired so many possessions. Syrus is near enough to overhear Clinia's despairing speech (256-63) and he immediately corrects the misunderstanding. The train of baggage belongs to Bacchis, Clitipho's mistress, whom they are bringing also. An interesting misinterpretation of the facts in the Bacchides has its origin in an eavesdropping scene (405-49). The clue to the situation lies in the fact that there are two courtesans, sisters, both with the same name, Bacchis. At Bacch. 385 Mnesilochus enters with a long monologue dwelling on the benefits of friendship as exemplified by his chum, Pistoclerus, who has found his mistress, Bacchis, for him. He concludes his entrance monologue with an announcement of the approach of Lydus and Philoxenus, his friend's father and tutor, and he eavesdrops on their entrance dialogue. Lydus is heaping angry abuse on his pupil, Pistoclerus, for succumbing to the enchantments of the courtesan, Bacchis. The father makes conciliatory replies, pleading the youth of the lad and the customs of the time. Mnesilochus wonders in puzzled aside (414-15) why Pistoclerus is being thus abused. In a second aside (435-36) he reveals that he has misinterpreted the facts to this extent. He thinks that Pistoclerus is being abused on his account. By securing a mistress for him, Pistoclerus has fallen under the suspicion of taking the girl for his own pleasure. What Mnesilochus does not know is that there are two Bacchises, and that Pistoclerus has become involved with the sister of his mistress. He comes forward to clear his chum's name but receives from Lydus such a convincing account of Pistoclerus' actions that he is persuaded that he has been betrayed both by his mistress and by his chum.¹ Demea overhears and misinterprets the entrance

¹Mnesilochus' belief that he has been betrayed by his mistress and chum is one of the errores minores. It becomes a complicating factor in that because of it Mnesilochus gives up the money to his father and Chrysalus has to resort to more trickery. But the eavesdropping is not responsible for the error. It is the convincing account of Pistoclerus' actions by the direct testimony of Lydus that confirms him in the error and brings about a reversal from joy to fear. Observe that in this instance the audience is aware of the true situation.

dialogue between Hegio and Geta at Adelph. 447 ff. Demea's son, Aeschines, has become involved with the daughter of Sostrata, and has given his promise to marry her. But Aeschines in carrying off a music-girl for his brother, Ctesipho, has fallen under suspicion of taking the girl for his own pleasure, one of the major errores of the play. Sostrata, hearing that Aeschines has carried off a music-girl, believes that he has betrayed her daughter. She summons her relative, Hegio. As Hegio appears, Demea overhears him expressing his indignation at the ungentlemanly actions of Aeschines. Demea, who knows nothing of the affair with Sostrata's daughter, believes that Hegio is condemning Aeschines merely because of the escapade of the night before. "He's heard about the music-girl," says Demea (451).¹ At Pseud. 1101 Ballio and Simo are congratulating themselves on the failure of Pseudolus' intrigue when they catch sight of the soldier's messenger, Harpax. They comment on his military appearance and decide to eavesdrop. Harpax' entrance monody (1103-23),² the conventional speech of the virtuous slave, contains very little of interest for the eavesdroppers, and they probably do not hear it distinctly. But in concluding Harpax mentions money for the pimp and a desire for a woman. Overhearing these words, Ballio falls into the error of thinking that the stranger is seeking entertainment at his household. The pleasant anticipation of swindling the stranger takes precedence for the moment over his joy at the frustration of Pseudolus. But in the dialogue which follows their contact with Harpax (1140) discovery of this error minor is made as well as the major discovery, the discovery of the success of Pseudolus' trickery by the three victims, Ballio, Simo, and Harpax.

The dramatist is sometimes able to develop fear and suspense through the overhearing of the servus currens monologue.³

¹Cf. Donatus ad 451. "sic errat Demea, ut intellegatur, quantum debeat irasci in his, quae inopinata audiet." This is one of the errores minores.

²For the content of the monody cf. Fraenkel, op. cit., pp. 243 ff.

³Eavesdropping is almost inseparably joined with the servus currens monologue. (Cf. Phorm. 179 ff.; Adelph. 299 ff.; Capt. 790; Stich. 274; Trin. 1008; Asin. 267; And. 338; Phorm. 841. Most. 348 is not overheard but it is not properly a servus currens monologue. Law, op. cit., p. 31, n. 1.) Since the

In the Mercator Charinus speaks the prologue and concludes with an announcement of the hurried approach of his slave, Acanthio (109-110). The very sight of someone running from the harbor is sufficient to arouse Charinus' fear, since he has left his newly acquired sweetheart there. The servus currens monologue emphasizes the desperate need for haste, the physical exhaustion of the runner, and the difficulty of making one's way along the crowded streets. We learn that the slave is seeking Charinus and that he is the bearer of bad news. The runner's monologue is punctuated with frequent asides (120-21, 123, 126) by Charinus which reveal the suspense under which he is laboring, a suspense which is communicated to the spectators. Charinus announces his presence at 132 but the telling of the news is delayed for 50 lines by the slave's refusal to divulge the information until he has been variously appeased by Charinus.¹ At

servus currens monologue parodies the conventional messenger's speech in tragedy some necessity was possibly felt that there should be someone on stage to whom the message might be brought. This character was in a somewhat awkward position during a long entrance monologue unless the dramatist represented him as listening in and gave him some asides. The servus currens monologue is itself comic but the asides do not usually contribute much to the comic effect. And in the greater number of instances the asides fail to reveal fear and suspense on the part of the listener. They generally express surprise at the evidence of haste and a curiosity to know what news the running slave is bringing. The servus currens monologue pictures the urgent haste of the entering character to find some person for whom he has important news. The person sought is usually on the stage. He hears only that the slave has news for him; he does not hear what the news is. The eavesdropper usually calls to the entering character and dialogue develops after some reluctance on the part of the servus currens to see and recognize the person speaking to him. The delivery of the information is frequently delayed for several lines after dialogue begins. The nature of the information varies according to the part of the play in which the scene occurs. Sometimes it has a complicating force as Phorm. 179 and Adelph. 299, sometimes a resolving force as at Capt. 790 and Stich. 274. For a more complete discussion of the servus currens monologue see Weissmann, De servi currentis persona apud comicos Romanos (Giessae: 1911), and Wagner, De Nuntiis Comicis (Vratislaviae: 1913).

¹Acanthio's message is to the effect that Charinus' father has seen his son's mistress. Demipho's desire for the girl and Acanthio's fiction that Charinus purchased her as a present for his mother begin the complications of the play. The message is important for the dramatic action but Charinus does not get it through eavesdropping. The value of the eavesdropping consists in the developing of suspense.

Phorm. 179 ff. Antipho's asides reveal a similar reaction as he announces Geta and listens with Phaedria to Geta's servus currens monologue (179-95). The eavesdroppers do not hear Geta say that the master has arrived. They get only an impression of bad news.¹ At Adelph. 299 Sostrata and Canthara are on the stage when Geta comes on running. They are unable to hear him distinctly but perceive his excitement and distress, which produces audible reactions of nervousness and alarm in them. Sostrata calls to the slave at 320 and hears his message after a brief, natural delay, due to excitement and breathlessness.²

Pythias' entrance monologue at Eun. 643-49 creates anxiety and suspense for the eavesdropper. The audience is aware of the facts of the situation and knows what Pythias has to tell but Phaedria is filled with the fear of the unknown.³ Phaedria comes on the stage at 629, concluding his entrance monologue with an announcement of Pythias. He expresses his surprise at her hurried exit from the house and her excited, indignant speech fills him with alarm. He calls to her at 650 and learns of the outrage which the false eunuch has committed.⁴ In the

¹The eavesdropping creates fear and suspense. The message is given directly. Cf. Donatus ad 179: "in hac scaena serui currentis officium est tendens ad perturbationem Antiphonis, quem oportet abesse conspectui patris usque ad cognitionem rerum et καταστροφὴν fabulae."

²In other examples of the servus currens monologue the presence of the eavesdropper adds little or nothing to the suspense or dramatic effect. The asides express only a mild interest in what the running slave has to tell. They are more concerned with his appearance and actions. The asides may possess some slight interest in themselves but they serve primarily to obviate the silence of the non-participating actor. Cf. Capt. 790; Stich. 274; Trin. 1008; And. 338; Phorm. 841.

³In an attempt to win the favor of his mistress, Thais, Phaedria has procured a eunuch as a present for her. With the assistance of Parmeno, Phaedria's brother, Chaerea has substituted himself for the eunuch in order to gain admittance to the courtesan's household and access to a slave-girl belonging to Thais. Pythias has discovered the outrage of the supposed eunuch but she does not know that Chaerea is the guilty person.

⁴The information which Phaedria gets from Pythias starts a chain of action which leads to the discovery of Chaerea's intrigue. The information is obtained, not through eavesdropping, but by questioning. The eavesdropping possesses dramatic value only in so far as it serves to develop suspense.

Heauton Syrus, the intriguing slave, has introduced Clitipho's mistress, Bacchis, into his master's house on the pretext that she is the mistress of Clinia. Clitipho has been warned by Syrus to keep up the pretense and not give the secret away by showing attention to the courtesan. At 559 Syrus remains on stage with a three-line link monologue and announces someone coming from the house. Chremes appears with Clitipho (562), to whom he is administering a severe rebuke for not keeping his hands off Bacchis and, as Chremes thinks, for being false to his friend. Syrus listens with anxious asides, fearful that his intrigue may be discovered through the indiscretion of Clitipho.¹ Coming forward at 579 Syrus proceeds to rebuke Clitipho even more sharply, as Chremes thinks, for betraying his friend, but as Clitipho realizes, for endangering the success of the intrigue.

At Heaut. 730 ff. the entering character becomes aware of the eavesdropper's presence and speaks for effect,² creating fear and suspense. At 722 Syrus announces Bacchis as coming from the house, and he and Clinia overhear her six-line entrance speech (723-28). Her threat of punishment for Syrus if he fails to produce the ten minas which he promised her brings a comment in aside from the eavesdroppers. Bacchis' attention is attracted by their asides but she pretends not to see them. "dormiunt, ego pol istos commovebo," she says (730).³ And speaking with the intention of being overheard, she calls to her maid and instructs her to hurry off to the miles who is celebrating the feast of Dionysus at a neighboring farm. The maid is to urge the miles to come to the rescue of her mistress, to inform him that Bacchis is being detained here against her will. These instructions bring Syrus out of hiding in haste, and he promises to provide the money as agreed (736). Pythias is aware of the presence of

¹Cf. Eugraphius ad 564. "Syrus seruus credit senem inuenisse filium amare meretricem, quae res antea per dolum celabatur. ideo uehementer metuit."

²Cf. supra, p. 29.

³Cf. Eugraphius on 730. "uult excitare eos, qui sibi pecuniam promiserunt nec dederunt, uti fingat se uocatam esse a nescio quo et uelle discedere. itaque consentiente ancilla fingit mendacium, quod nescio quam uillam demonstrauerit cuiusdam amatoris."

Parmeno at Eun. 942 and makes a feigned entrance speech for the purpose of frightening and embarrassing him. She announces his approach at 918 and declares that she will go inside and then come out and thoroughly frighten the rogue. Parmeno comes on with an 18-line entrance monologue in which he expresses his satisfaction that he has succeeded in getting Chaerea introduced into the courtesan's household,¹ where he may see from the inside the meanness and greed and filth of such establishments. Pythias returns to the stage and her first two lines (941-42) are spoken in aside:²

ego te pro istis dictis et factis, scelus
ulciscar, ut me inpune in mos inluseris.

Then raising her voice so that Parmeno can hear, she continues:

pro deum fidem, facinu foedum! o infelicem adolescentulum!
o scelestum Parmenonem, qui istum huc adduxit!

In answer to Parmeno's frightened questions she explains that Chaerea has been caught and will receive the punishment of the adulterer.³ Pardalisca is aware of the presence of the senex on the stage at Cas. 621 and her entrance monody (621-30) is intended to be overheard by him. The senex calls attention to the sounds of uproar within the house (620) and listens in alarm as Pardalisca comes running out with a mock-tragic monody:

nulla sum, nulla sum, tota, tota occidi
cor metu mortuomst, membra miserae tremunt,

¹Cf. supra, p. 55, n. 3.

²Pythias may have returned from the house in time to overhear the end of Parmeno's entrance monologue, and her wrathful aside may refer in part to his words. Cf. Miltner, op. cit., pp. 63-64. On the other hand, her aside may merely continue her wrathful mood of 919-22.

³There is good comic effect in this scene. The spectators know that nothing has happened to Chaerea, and that Pythias is playing a trick on Parmeno in return for the trick which he engineered against her mistress. Parmeno, badly frightened for the safety of Chaerea, tells the story to the senex. This motivates the departure of the senex into the house of Thais, where he is needed to confirm the betrothal of Chaerea and Pamphila. Cf. Donatus ad 941. "miro artificio poetae et ab initio non placatur Pythias non redit in gratiam Chaerea et insuper nunc a Parmenone irritatur, ut per eam Parmeno terreatur, per Parmenonem ingredi at Thaidem cogatur senex, per senem nuptiae confirmetur."

To the agitated questioning of the senex she explains that Casina is mad, and, armed with a sword, is threatening to slay whoever approaches her. Pardalisca says further that Casina's rage is particularly directed against the senex. The purpose of the scene is the embarrassment of the old man and amusement at his expense. The discomfiture of the miles in the Truculentus is accomplished in an eavesdropping scene at 551 ff. The courtesan, Phronesium, reclines on a couch, still very weak from the childbirth which she pretends to have experienced.¹ She is surrounded by maids and attendants. The miles has just presented generous gifts which have failed to win the approval of the courtesan, and puzzled and disheartened, he is preparing to depart. But catching sight of Cyamus approaching with a long train of gifts from Diniarchus, he decides to wait and see to whom the gifts are coming. There is no indication that Phronesium or the miles hear the 25-line entrance monologue (551-76) which Cyamus concludes by announcing his discovery of the courtesan. Coming forward to offer his gifts, Cyamus probably does not see the miles. But Phronesium is aware of the presence of the miles and speaks for effect, receiving the gifts of Diniarchus with exaggerated appreciation. She declares that she loves the giver of these gifts more than anyone else in the world. At 592 Cyamus catches sight of the miles and inquires who he is. Phronesium answers with an uncomplimentary identification, and further disparaging remarks by Cyamus and the courtesan bring the soldier forward in a rage at 604.² Diniarchus' joy is

¹Cf. supra, p. 46.

²Fear and anxiety are caused in an eavesdropping scene at Cist. 639-43. Alcesimarchus rushed from the stage at 527, in crazy mood, uttering wild threats because Melaenis had firmly refused to permit his further association with Selenium. At this point (639) with Melaenis and Selenium on stage, he rushes from the house, waving a sword and calling upon Death to receive him. With a frightened exclamation Selenium runs to save her lover, and with suspicious suddenness, Alcesimarchus renounces the embrace of Death for that of his sweetheart. Melaenis is somewhat suspicious of the lover's sincerity in his attempted suicide but she is brushed aside (646). Alcesimarchus bears Selenium off into his house and Melaenis follows (652).

It is possible that Alcesimarchus was aware of the presence of mother and daughter on the stage, and that his suicide act was staged for their benefit. However, his suicide mood may be genuine and merely a continuation of the crazy mood of 519 ff.

turned to fear through an eavesdropping scene at Truc. 711 ff. He comes on stage at 699 exulting in the fact that Phronesium has received his gifts with pleasure and has accepted the gifts of the miles with coldness and reserve. Diniarchus is of the opinion that if the soldier is rejected Phronesium will bestow her favors only upon himself. He decides to watch the door and see who goes in and comes out. At this point (711) Astaphium appears, speaking to Phronesium within, and it is evident from what she says that a gentleman is being entertained at that very moment by the courtesan.

CHAPTER V

SECONDARY VALUES OF EAVESDROPPING

Whether or not eavesdropping scenes contribute to dramatic action, they sometimes serve to promote effects that are appropriate to drama as a literary type or to comedy as a form of drama. The comic dramatist was primarily interested in entertaining his audience. Various possibilities for entertainment are inherent in the eavesdropping scene. The main interest of the spectators is centered on the entering character, but it is possible for the dramatist to rouse considerable interest in the reactions of the eavesdropper, even though the eavesdropper is hearing nothing which is of particular importance to him.¹ Most often the eavesdropper's reactions promote comic effects. The reactions may be expressed in asides which reveal appreciation, complacency, anger, chagrin, wit, or sarcasm.² When there are no asides the reactions may have been expressed by facial expression, if there were no masks, or by attitude and gesture.³ Conceivably, when the eavesdropper's asides are devoid of interest per se they may sometimes serve to relieve the monotony of long-winded entrance monologues. Further the mere presence of the eavesdropper lurking in the background possibly served in some instances to enhance the atmosphere of trickery which is so prominent in many of the comedies. Perhaps also there were satisfying scenic or pictorial effects in the figures of the eavesdroppers waiting at one end of the long stage for the approach of the characters entering from the other end. We must

¹Cf. supra, p. 47.

²Cf. Leo (Der Monolog, 68), who thinks that the reactions of the eavesdropper serve to compensate for the loss of the chorus.

³Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., XXXIV (1939), 23. Cooke's characterization of Charlie Chaplin (Atlantic Monthly [August, 1939], 179) as a man "who acted as a sort of one-man chorus of facial comment on the plot and dialogue of the other actors" is interesting in this connection.

be content to suggest such advantages as possibilities rather than assert them as facts.

In analyzing the secondary advantages of eavesdropping scenes which fail to contribute to dramatic action, we shall be concerned mainly with the development of comic effects. Of eavesdropping scenes which promote comic effects the most conspicuous feature is the aside. In some instances the comic effect depends almost entirely on the clever comment, or the witty or sarcastic aside. But more satisfying comic effects are obtained when the humor is inherent in the situation. The humorous situation may include the content of what is overheard, the persons involved in the overhearing, and the conditions surrounding the eavesdropping scene. Even in these examples the asides which reveal the eavesdropper's reactions usually contribute to the comic effect. For the purpose of analysis, therefore, we may divide comic eavesdropping scenes into two groups:¹ (I) Scenes in which the comic effect is inherent in the situation. (II) Scenes in which the comic effect depends mainly on the aside.

I

In the eavesdropping scene at Amph. 153 ff. the comic effect results from the situation, plus asides. That is, the content of what is overheard, the conditions surrounding the eavesdropping, the persons involved, and the clever asides all contribute to the comic effect. Mercury gives the prologue and informs the audience (124 ff.) that, as Jupiter has taken the form of Amphytruo, he has taken the form of Amphytruo's slave, Sosia. Mercury is standing in front of Amphytruo's house. He announces the approach of Sosia from the harbor (148) and declares his intention of driving him away. Mercury is a comic figure throughout the play, contributing a prankish sort of humor to every scene in which he appears. With this fact in mind we can more easily imagine his role in this eavesdropping scene. We suspect considerable by-play on the part of Mercury in the way of attitude and gesture as Sosia comes on with a long entrance monody (153-340). It is late at night. Sosia has been

¹Unless the comic effect is increased by the overhearing, I shall not consider overheard speeches which possess comic effect in themselves.

routed out of bed to carry a message, announcing to Alcumena that her husband has arrived at the harbor. The first part of the entrance monody is a mixture of grumbling at the task imposed on him, and a whistling to keep his courage up as Sosia imagines the dangers lurking in the dark. Then, rehearsing the message which he is to relate to Alcumena, he describes the battle in which Amphitruo defeated the Teleboeans, parodying the conventional messenger's speech in tragedy (202-62). There follows some humorous comment on the length of the night, and at 292 he discovers the presence of Mercury. Throughout the speech emphasis is laid on the development of Sosia's character as a boastful but cowardly slave. Mercury's asides serve to bring into prominence the traits which Sosia is revealing. The comic effect is more pronounced after Sosia catches sight of Mercury. Mercury no longer speaks in aside but raises his voice and speaks for effect, with the intention of frightening Sosia, who is already displaying considerable timidity. From 292 to 340 Sosia is listening to Mercury, who pretends to be unaware of Sosia's presence, and Mercury is listening to Sosia, who supposes himself unseen. The comic effect is increased by the fact that the impersonator of Sosia is eavesdropping on Sosia. The audience enjoys in anticipation the surprise which awaits Sosia when he discovers that the man in front of him is also Sosia.

In the prinking scene in the Mostellaria (157 ff.) the comic effect is enhanced by the fact that the eavesdropper is the lover, listening to the conversation of his sweetheart. The chief interest of the dramatist in this scene is character portrayal,¹ as he contrasts the worldly wisdom of the old servant with the charming innocence of the young girl, who insists on reserving her affection and favors for Philolaches alone. But the audience has an equal interest in the reactions of Philolaches,

¹According to Hough (op. cit., p. 67) the chief purpose of this scene is comic. He says: "Scapha is introduced primarily to allow a humorous conversation punctuated by comments from Philolaches, in which characterization of Philematium is of minor importance to Plautus and is used merely as an excuse for the scene." However, this scene is an integral part of an elaborate exposition in which character and atmosphere are emphasized. The fact that the persons whose characters are portrayed in such detail do not appear again in the play supports the view that Philemon and Plautus were interested in character for its own sake. Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., XI (1916), 140.

who, having finished his long aria, remains on stage as an eager listener and spectator until he comes forward at the conclusion of the toilet scene (292). Perhaps the chief comic element is found in the shifting moods reflected in the lover's asides: satisfaction at Scapha's praise of his sweetheart (170; 174), joy at the evidence of devotion on the part of Philematium (206; 222; 229; 233), astonishment and indignation as Scapha tries to instill some of her own worldly wisdom into the mind of her young mistress (191; 203; 212; 218), and rather grudging admiration of the old woman's cleverness (260; 270; 279). The eavesdropping scene at Poen. 210-330 has many points of similarity. In this scene the eavesdropping lover is accompanied by the intriguing slave. As frequently in these comedies, the intriguing slave, while exerting himself in the lover's behalf, is out of sympathy with the lover's symptoms and considers them a fit subject for jesting. As in the Mostellaria Scapha is provided as an interesting character contrast to Philematium, so in the Poenulus, the younger sister, Anterastilis, brings into prominence the stronger figure of her sister. The toilet is already completed but the conversation of the girls centers chiefly around that theme, particularly the long hours that are needed for a woman's proper grooming. The first 37 lines consist of a duet by the sisters, without asides from the eavesdroppers, concerning the time and attention required for a woman's toilet. The following 82 lines are about equally divided between the speeches of the girls and the long conversational asides of Agorastocles and Milphio. The comic effect depends primarily upon the lover's sentimental remarks and the dry witticisms of the unsympathetic slave. As the sisters prepare to depart for the temple of Venus, Agorastocles goes forward to greet them (330). A similar opportunity for eavesdropping is provided when the two sisters return from the temple (1174-1211). Hanno has discovered that in all probability the girls are his own daughters,¹ and Agorastocles is on the point of conducting him to the temple to search for the pair when they are seen approaching. Their entrance duet touches upon the beautiful decorations of the temple, the favor shown them by the goddess, and the respect and admiration of the young men. The comments of the eaves-

¹Cf. supra, p. 43.

droppers are not so much concerned with what they hear but consist rather of comic by-play (1191; 1195) inspired by the presence of the girls. In the Pseudolus the lover and the unsympathetic slave eavesdrop on a scene in which the lover's sweetheart plays only a minor role (133-242). Calidorus announces Ballio (130) to Pseudolus and they make disparaging remarks about the pimp as he comes out of the house. Ballio comes out (133) shouting abuse at the members of his household whom he summons to the stage. He characterizes his menservants, first in a general way as a worthless, lazy, thieving lot, then individually, and assigns each a particular task to perform. At 170 Ballio appears to be ready to depart and orders his puer to lead the way, but he suddenly remembers that he has an edict for the women.¹ With heavy sarcasm and coarse threats he abuses them in turn, and demands of each that they obtain for him generous birthday gifts from their lovers. Calidorus and Pseudolus listen in silence during the first 60 lines² but interrupt his abuse of the women with asides. There is a two-line exchange between the eavesdroppers at 294 ff., a ten-line conversation in aside at 201 ff., and another of ten lines at 230 ff. This last is provoked by Ballio's abuse and the threat directed at Phoenicium, Calidorus' sweetheart.³ At 241 Ballio prepares again to depart, ordering the puer to precede, when, urged by Calidorus, Pseudolus hails the pimp with the comic "hodie nate, heus, hodie nate, tibi ego dico, heus, hodie nate." The scene itself is comic. There is reason to think that "cracking the whip" was a source of comic effect in ancient comedy. The comic

¹Ballio's tirade comes to a natural pause at 170 and the second half is in many respects a duplicate of the first half. This has led to the belief that the second half of the scene was added by Plautus. Fraenkel (op. cit., pp. 144 ff.) has found strong arguments for this point of view and he sees also considerable Plautine expansion in the first half of the speech. Cf. also Klinger, Hermes, LXIV (1929), 110-39; Hough, op. cit., p. 57.

²This long silence on the part of Pseudolus and Calidorus is perhaps less awkward because of a large number of supernumeraries. Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., XXXII (1937), 204.

³This threat is inconsistent with the fact that Ballio has already sold the girl. However she is still Ballio's property and subject to his whim until the soldier has made the final payment. Moreover the threat is a natural one to insert in such an harangue as this of Ballio's. Cf. Hough, op. cit., p. 57.

effect is increased by the fact that lover and slave are forced to stand by in fuming impotence and listen to Ballio's display of temperament. However, their asides are not particularly humorous. There is some attempt at comedy in their announcement (128 ff.) and in the play on words in their aside (194)--magnificus--malificus. Their asides reveal a desire to hear what Ballio is saying (195; 207 ff.); anger, disgust, and impotence (201 ff.); distress and anxiety (230 ff.).

The Casina is particularly rich in eavesdropping scenes in which the situation provides the comic effect.¹ (a) In the first scene we find a deviation from the usual eavesdropping pattern.² Cleustrata comes on stage at 531. She has just received the information which Chalinus acquired in an eavesdropping scene at 437 ff., and she is filled with indignation at her husband and at his neighbor, Alcesimus, who is assisting in the plot. She announces Alcesimus as coming from the house (536) and makes some disparaging comments on him. There is no indication that she overhears his brief entrance monologue, in which Alcesimus wonders why his wife has not been invited over to help with the wedding. He catches sight of Cleustrata and supposes that she has come to extend the invitation. But Cleustrata neglects to make the expected invitation and even refuses the proffered assistance. She apparently leaves the stage at 548 and Alcesimus departs with an exit monologue (549-57), puzzled, disgruntled, and suspicious that the planned intrigue has leaked out. Cleustrata steps out at 558 and it is apparent that she has been listening from the doorway to Alcesimus' exit monologue.³ She exults over the mystification of Alcesimus and wishes her

¹The majority of eavesdropping scenes in the Casina emphasize comic effects. The explanation lies in the nature of the comedy, which is a farcical burlesque.

²Cf. supra, p. 19, n. 1.

³Cleustrata's words, nunc uale, atque istanc iube, would under normal conditions indicate that she made her exit at 548. But her words, iam hic est ludificatus, coming immediately after his departure at 553, seem to mean that she has heard Alcesimus' exit monologue. She would, of course, be visible to the audience if she withdrew only to her doorway, and the spectators would be conscious of her eavesdropping. This is the only instance of eavesdropping on an exit monologue, except in the three examples in which the exit monologue is also an entrance monologue. Cf. supra, p. 14, n. 1.

husband would come along. (b) Cleustrata announces her husband at 562 and eavesdrops on his entrance monologue (563-75). The entrance speech reflects Lysidamus' disgust at the manner in which he has spent his day. He observes that it is foolish for a lover to go to the forum on the day on which a mistress awaits him. He comments on his ineffectiveness as an advocate in his present emotional state. Then catching sight of his wife, he is suddenly fearful that she has overheard him. To which exclamation Cleustrata replies in aside (576): "audiui ecastor cum malo magno tuo." The situation affords some amusement; the information Cleustrata already possessed. (c) In her entrance monologue (759 ff.) Pardalisca supplies details which make possible the comic effect in the eavesdropping scene at 780-88. She informs the audience of what is happening inside. Lysidamus is clamoring at the cooks to hurry their preparations for dinner. Olympio is dressed and garlanded for the wedding party. The women are in the women's apartments, dressing the bride, not Casina, but Chalinus, who is to be substituted for Casina. They have given the cooks instructions to take plenty of time in preparing the feast in order to drive the old man out without his dinner. Pardalisca announces him at 779 and Lysidamus appears with eight lines addressed to his wife within. The women are to dine when the food is ready; he will dine at the farm, to which place he wishes to escort the newly wedded couple lest some ruffian abduct the bride. Pardalisca comments in an aside that the women have driven the old man out without his dinner, just as she said. The sound of her voice attracts the attention of the old man and he accuses her of eavesdropping. He orders her to go inside, then remarks that he can now say what he pleases. (d) At 814 ff. Olympio is the butt of Pardalisca's jesting. Olympio and Lysidamus are on stage when Pardalisca, bringing out the bride, advises her to dominate and control her husband always, to despoil him in order to clothe herself, to deceive him night and day. Olympio's angry asides are soothed by Lysidamus. The amusement is all the greater because the audience is aware that Chalinus is in the bride's clothes. After the women have retired Lysidamus escorts the bride and groom into the house next door. The comedy closes with two eavesdropping scenes in which there are no asides but the enjoyment of the eavesdroppers is manifest and is obviously transferred to the audience. (1) Having enjoyed

the wedding dinner, the women come from the house at 855, and, filled with merriment and eager anticipation, they await developments from the house next door. Warning each other to be silent as the door creaks (874), they listen with glee as Olympio comes out with a song of woe (875-91) at the shame and disgrace which has befallen him. (2) The scene is repeated at 937-69 with Olympio added to the number of eavesdroppers. Lysidamus comes from the house next door, having discovered in his turn Casina changed to Chalinus. Stricken with shame and rendered desperate by the realization that his wife is aware of his intrigue, he is on the point of imitating a runaway slave when Chalinus appears at the door and invites him back to the bedchamber. Turning to flee in the opposite direction, he is confronted by Cleustrata, who steps out to face him with sarcastic address.

The lover and unsympathetic slave play eavesdropper in two scenes in the Curculio in which the comic element predominates. Coming on stage at the opening of the play, Palinurus discovers his master, Phaedromus, bearing a large bowl of wine. Phaedromus explains that he will sprinkle a little of the wine on the doorstep of the pimp's house. The old woman who keeps the door will be aroused by the fragrance and in return for the contents of the bowl will allow him a secret meeting with his sweetheart. Phaedromus pours the wine on generously with eager entreaties to the door, accompanied by sarcastic comments from Palinurus. Old Leaena comes out with a rapturous monody (96-109) on the joys of wine, entranced by the odor but looking anxiously for the bowl itself. Asides follow from the eavesdroppers, comic in nature, concerning the degree of the old woman's thirst and her probable capacity. Palinurus' fear that her capacity will prove too great and that none of the wine will be left for him adds to the comic effect. Her thirst satisfied, Leaena promises to send Planesium out and returns into the house (138). Master and slave wait on stage for the second eavesdropping scene. Phaedromus addresses a serenade to the bolts which hold the door. The bolts respond at 156 and Leaena advises the girl to step softly and beware of the creaking hinge lest it rouse the pimp. The old woman pours a little water on the hinge to silence it and this brings a comic aside from Palinurus (160-61). Planesium moves out, inquiring the whereabouts of her lover, and Phaedromus answers (165).

In an eavesdropping scene in the Adelphoe (364-73) the person overheard is aware of the presence of the eavesdropper and speaks for effect.¹ We learn from Demea's entrance monologue (355 ff.) that he has discovered that Ctesipho had a part with Aeschines in the carrying off of the music girl. Demea is filled with anguish and indignation to think that the son whom he has reared with such strictness is being led astray by the youth who has been brought up under the loose discipline of Micio. From Syrus, whose approach he announces (361), he hopes to learn the whereabouts of his son. Syrus enters at 364 with an apparent soliloquy. He has told the whole affair to Micio. Micio was delighted, praised his son for managing the prank and him (Syrus) for advising it, even counted him out some money which he has expended to his satisfaction. This speech is punctuated by indignant, ejaculatory asides from Demea. The offhand way in which Syrus allows himself to discover the presence of Demea (373) may be taken to indicate that he was aware of the old man's presence all along and was amusing himself at Demea's expense.² Demea is overheard in an eavesdropping scene at Adelph. 540 ff. Syrus announces his father's approach to Ctesipho, who, desirous of keeping out of the old man's path, hurries into the house. From the house he sends forth anxious queries and entreaties to Syrus to keep the old man from coming inside. Syrus answers him in impatient asides as he listens and comments on Demea's entrance monologue. There is nothing of particular interest in the entrance monologue. The situation is comic and Syrus' comments have some comic value. The eavesdropping scene has some comic value at Adelph. 763 ff. The patience of the stern old Demea is being more and more sorely tried by Micio's indifference to the lack of discipline in his household. Demea expresses his belief in the utter hopelessness of such a household in a link monologue following the departure of Micio at 757. At the conclusion of Demea's speech Syrus appears with a tipsy four-line entrance monologue. The entrance of the drunken Syrus and the drunken scene which follows is comic in itself. The comedy is increased by the fact that it is the strict teetotaler,

¹Cf. supra, p. 29.

²Cf. Dziatzko-Kauer, Adelphoe (Leipzig: 1903), n. on 364.

Demea, who overhears the entrance speech. "illud sis uide: exemplum disciplinae?" says Demea.

The comic effect of Chaerea's entrance monologue at Eun. 549 ff. is increased by the eavesdropper's presence. Antipho comes on stage at 539 with a ten-line entrance monologue in which he explains that he is looking for Chaerea. He sees Chaerea coming from the house of Thais, dressed in the clothes of the eunuch, and he waits in the background to discover the meaning of it. Filled with exultation over the success of his venture, Chaerea comes on stage with an excited speech, congratulating himself that there is no one about, no one following him, nothing to prevent his giving expression to his joy, no one to load him with questions about his excitement, his dress, where he has been, what he has been doing, etc. At this point (557) Antipho steps forward saying: "I'll do him the favor I see he desires." And he begins to question him, using the same words which Chaerea had just used.¹ In the Mercator the details of the dream which Demipho recounts (225-71) are a preparation for the comic effect in the eavesdropping scene which follows. Demipho announces Lysimachus and overhears the instructions which he gives to his slave (272-73):

profecto ego illunc hircum castrari uolo,
ruri qui uobeis exhibet negotium.

This is particularly appropriate after the recounting of the dream, and is an ill omen as Demipho appreciates in an aside. The remainder of Lysimachus' entrance speech, containing conventional instructions to his slave, is of no interest to the eavesdropper.

¹In reply to Antipho's questions Chaerea tells of his successful exploit with the girl in the courtesan's establishment. Commenting on verse 539 Donatus says: "Bene inventa persona est cui narret Chaerea, ne unus diu loquatur, ut apud Menandrum." Donatus' comment indicates that Antipho was not in the Greek original. Terence invented Antipho in order to avoid a narrative soliloquy by Chaerea. Antipho's eavesdropping is not a primary function but leads to the ensuing dialogue. The eavesdropping function is so incidental that one could hardly find a better example of the force exerted by entrance technique: A monologue; B monologue; AB dialogue. However, Terence utilized the eavesdropping scene, which followed naturally upon the creation of the character and the form of entrance, to promote comic effect.

The comic effect of the eavesdropping at Amph. 499 ff. lies in the clever asides of Mercury. At 497 he announces the coming of Jupiter, wearing the guise of Amphitruc, and Alcumena. Jupiter is making his farewells and Alcumena is complaining because of the early departure of her supposed husband. Mercury comments on the cleverness of Jupiter and assumes the credit for it since Jupiter is his father. "Watch how sweetly he will smooth her down," says Mercury. Jupiter assures Alcumena of his devotion, and Mercury comments that if Juno should discover his doings he would wish he were Amphitruc in truth. At 515 Mercury comes forward to join the conversation but even after the other two are aware of his presence his asides continue in the comic vein. At Asin. 545 the two roguish slaves return from the forum with money from the sale of the asses, money which they intend to turn over to their young master to facilitate his love affair.¹ At 585 Libanus announces Argyrippus coming from the lena's house with his sweetheart. Leonida answers: "opprime os, is est. sub-auscultemus." Li. "They're crying. Let's keep still and listen." Le. "Wish I had a pole." Li. "What for?" Le. "To whack those asses if they should start to bray in the wallet here." The asides² of the two slaves continue to furnish comic relief as they listen to the tearful love scene which follows. They interrupt it finally by stationing themselves one on each side of the lovers and giving a sudden greeting (618). The scene continues with coarse comedy of the slapstick variety. At Phorm. 199 ff. Geta reports to Phaedria and Antipho that the latter's father has returned from abroad. Antipho is badly frightened because he has taken a wife during his father's absence, contrary to the old man's wishes.³ As Demipho is seen coming down the street (215), Antipho hurries off, unable to face his father's anger. Geta and Phaedria prepare to meet the attack in Antipho's stead. Geta advises Phaedria to go forward first while he remains in ambush to act as a reserve force in case of need.

¹Cf. supra, p. 40.

²For evidence of Plautine expansion in the asides cf. Fraenkel, op. cit., pp. 215 ff.; Jachmann, op. cit., pp. 35 ff.

³Cf. supra, p. 34.

Demipho comes on at 231 with angry, indignant words for his son and for Geta, who has acted as adviser to the boy. "What will they say to me, or what excuse will they find, I wonder," says the old man. To which Geta replies in aside: "Oh, I'll find one, never fear." Geta's asides show some cleverness and take up considerable space, the last one being six lines in length, after which he sends Phaedria forward to engage Demipho (252). The atmosphere of intrigue is enhanced by Geta's presence as eavesdropper during the meeting of Phaedria and Demipho. Geta continues with briefer comic asides, appreciative of Phaedria's acting. He comes forward to receive his share of Demipho's accusations at 285 and confesses that he has been eavesdropping. At Most. 429 Tranio withdraws into the background to await the arrival of Theopropides and listen to his entrance monologue (431-45). The old man comes on with the conventional speech of the returned traveler,¹ expressing his thanks to Neptune for saving him from the sea (to which he will never trust himself again). Tranio remarks in aside: "You've made a big mistake, Neptune. It's a fine opportunity that you've let slip." As Theopropides speculates on the fine welcome which he will get from his family Tranio says in aside: "news of your death would be more welcome." Similarly, Tranio's asides (700-701; 711-17) provide comic effect as he eavesdrops on Simo's entrance monologue at 690 ff.² In the Asinaria, Leonida's entrance monologue (267-95), a servus currens monologue, is broken by seven asides from Libanus, which add slight comic effect. The entrance speech itself is comic. The asides are more numerous than

¹Cf. Stich. 402 ff.; Trin. 820 ff.; Mil. 411 ff.

²A striking feature of this scene is the fact that Theopropides is apparently on the stage throughout but takes no part in the action and does not eavesdrop. At 682 he orders Tranio to call on Simo and inquire if it will be convenient for them to inspect the house. Theopropides says that he will wait outside. Just as if the old man had left the stage Tranio delivers an apparent link monologue, in which he utters a curse at Theopropides and announces the coming of Simo. He eavesdrops on Simo's entrance monologue and enters into conversation with him. Not until verse 775 does Tranio leave Simo, cross the stage, and summon Theopropides to join the conversation. Theopropides is silent, obviously not eavesdropping, and with no remarks in aside through 101 lines, unless we accept the half line at 521a, which Leo rejects. Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., XXXII (1937), 207.

in the usual servus currens monologue.

In an eavesdropping scene at Capt. 263-93 the asides of Tyndarus furnish the comic element.¹ Hegio leads Philocrates, whom he mistakes for Tyndarus, aside for confidential questioning. Although Hegio is aware of the presence of Tyndarus, he seems to feel that he is far enough away so that the slave cannot eavesdrop. However, it is evident from the witty asides of Tyndarus that he is following closely the conversation between his master and Hegio.²

¹Cf. supra, p. 19, n. 1.

²The entrance technique at the beginning of the Persa affords an opportunity for eavesdropping, though we should perhaps not call it an eavesdropping scene. Toxilus enters with a six-line entrance monologue on the hardships of a lover, after which Sagaristio enters with six lines on the hardships of a slave. The two entrants become conscious of each other's presence and speak in asides which lead eventually to mutual identification. The scene is obviously intended to be comic. The comic effect lies in the apparent inability of the two entrants to identify each other. It is perhaps a parody on the slow recognition scenes in tragedy. Cf. Rud. 220 for a similar scene.

CHAPTER VI

FUTILITY IN EAVESDROPPING

In a considerable number of eavesdropping scenes we have been able to find values which would justify, or partially justify, the employment of eavesdropping. In a few instances the contribution made by eavesdropping appeared to be essential to the development of the action. In a much larger number of examples the contribution was of minor value, with only slight significance for the dramatic action, or making greater or less addition to the comic effect. There remain a larger number of eavesdropping scenes, similar in pattern and technique, which make no contribution at all, either to the dramatic action or to comic effect. We are confident that the dramatist did not invent these scenes for the sake of eavesdropping in itself, but that they have resulted somewhat inadvertently through the employment of other stereotyped and conventional features incidental to holding or bringing a character on stage.

Futility in eavesdropping is illustrated in the overhearing of Mnesilochus' entrance monody at Bacch. 612-24. Pistoclerus holds the stage after the departure of the parasite (605) and speculates on some means of assisting his chum. At 610 he steps into the background, warned by the creaking door, and announces that the unhappy Mnesilochus is coming from the house. Mnesilochus' entrance monody, filled with self-commiseration and self-condemnation, does not tell Pistoclerus anything which he does not already know.¹ At the conclusion of the monody, Pistoclerus makes one comment in aside (625): "consolandus hic mist," and comes forward with a greeting. Dialogue follows. A similar monody of distress is overheard by the heldover character at Rud. 664-76. Trachalio summons Daemones to the assistance of the

¹Pistoclerus is a heldover character, kept on stage for subsequent action. The dramatist wishes to portray the mood of Mnesilochus in an entrance monody. The most obvious role for Pistoclerus during this interval is that of eavesdropper. The eavesdropping is incidental and per se futile.

girls who are being attacked by Labrax in the temple. Daemones, calling to his slaves, rushes into the temple at 660. In a three-line link monologue Trachalio comments on the sounds of conflict within and announces the two frightened girls, who come hurrying from the shrine. Palaestra's entrance monody serves to picture the despair and distress of the maidens and contains nothing which is unknown to Trachalio. Trachalio comes forward at 677, commenting in aside: "cesso ego has consolari." At Cas. 213 Cleustrata sees her husband approaching and urges her friend, Myrrhina, to hurry from the stage. Myrrhina goes into the house at 216, and Lysidamus begins his entrance monologue at 217, with no intervening remarks by Cleustrata. She makes no comment during the course of his entrance monologue as he dilates on the joys of love and on the remarkable changes which love can make in the disposition of a man, even an old man. He concludes with disparaging remarks concerning his wife (227-28) and says: "tristem astare aspicio. blande haec mihi mala res appellanda est." His attempt at a warm and familiar greeting is rebuffed by Cleustrata. The entrance monologue reveals the fact that Lysidamus is in love with Casina, but that information Cleustrata already possesses (cf. 193 ff.). At Persa 462 Toxilus gives final instructions to Sagaristio, who is collaborating in the intrigue against the pimp, and advises him to retire from the scene with Saturio's daughter. They are to reappear when they see him talking with the pimp. The two withdraw and Dordalus comes on at once with a ten-line entrance monologue (470-79), in which he congratulates himself that he has sold the ancilla to Toxilus. There will be one less mouth to feed. Toxilus apparently pays no attention to the pimp's monologue; at any rate he has nothing to learn from it. In a two-line aside (481-82) he announces his intention of tricking the pimp and goes forward to greet him. In the Aulularia the heldover character is compelled to listen to an extremely long entrance monologue without any apparent advantage resulting from the overhearing. Euclio remains on stage with a link monologue (460-74) and announces the approach of his prospective son-in-law, Megadorus. "I wouldn't dare pass him by without stopping to talk," he says. In his entrance monologue (475-536) Megadorus reports that his friends have approved his decision to marry Euclio's daughter, even though she will have no dowry. He continues with a diatribe on

wives with large dowries and on the extravagances of rich wives.¹ Euclio expresses his interest and approval in three asides of two lines each (496-97; 503-504; 523-24) but he learns nothing of value from the eavesdropping.² Megadorus catches sight of and greets Euclio at 536. Dialogue follows and Euclio tells Megadorus how much he has enjoyed listening to him. Parmeno comments briefly on the destructive force of love after the departure of Phaedria at Eun. 224, and announces the approach of the parasite and virgo. The girl, whom Gnatho is bringing as a present from the miles to Thais, wins the admiration of Parmeno and he reflects that the eunuch. (Phaedria's present to Thais) will make a sorry gift in comparison. Gnatho's entrance monologue (232-64) consists of a discourse on the advantages of the parasitical profession and on the success which Gnatho has made of the profession. Parmeno has two brief asides (254; 265) which indicate that he is following the narrative though it has no particular interest for him. At 267 Gnatho catches sight of Parmeno and brief, inconsequential dialogue follows. Demipho has a brief link monologue after the departure of Lysimachus at Merc. 327 and at 329 announces the approach of his son. He continues with the reflection that he must find some way to persuade his son to sell the girl without letting him suspect that she has caught his fancy.³ Charinus' long entrance monody (335-63), picturing the sufferings of a lover, is heard only indistinctly by Demipho, who inquires (364): "quid illuc est quod solus secum fabulatur filius?" The dramatist is interested in mood portrayal; the entrance monody contains some material which is already familiar to the audience but which Demipho must not be allowed to hear.⁴ There is an extensive amount of futile eavesdropping in the Stichus. At 150 Panegyris calls to Crocotium

¹Cf. Fraenkel, op. cit., pp. 137 ff. for Plautine expansion in the monologue.

²Conceivably, Euclio's three asides serve to relieve the monotony of Megadorus' long entrance monologue. Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., XXXIV (1939), 19.

³Cf. supra, p. 54.

⁴Cf. Leo, Der Monolog, 74. ". . . . Es wäre für die Handlung wichtig, wenn er die Worte verstünde."

and orders her to summon the parasite, Gelasimus.¹ Panegyris leaves the stage at 154 with the words: "propera atque actutum redi." From these words we naturally infer that Crocotium is present on the stage at 154 and that her immediate departure is forestalled by the appearance of Gelasimus himself (155). His entrance monologue, conventional in style and characteristic of the parasitical profession, continues for 41 lines without comment from Crocotium. At 196 she remarks in a two-line aside that this is the parasite whom she has been ordered to summon, and she announces that she will eavesdrop a bit before speaking to him. In a one-line aside at 217 she comments that the parasite is particularly funny when he is hungry. Not until 237 does she come forward to address the parasite and deliver her mistress' message. A second example of equally futile eavesdropping follows immediately (274-314).² Having informed the parasite that her mistress wishes to see him, Crocotium makes her exit at 264. Gelasimus remains on stage with a short link monologue, expressing his surprise at the summons. At 270 he announces and comments on the beauty of Pinacium, who enters at 274 with the conventional servus currens monologue. Pinacium's entrance is undoubtedly intended to be comic but the eavesdropping contributes nothing to the comic effect. In his one aside (288-89) the parasite shows mild curiosity in Pinacium's haste but he is more interested in the contents of the boy's basket than in the content of the speech. There is brief conversation between puer and parasite while Panegyris is being summoned to the door but the message which the servus currens brings is not revealed. The telling of the message is delayed for nearly 50 lines after Panegyris appears (326). At Trin. 1008-59 the servus currens is not bringing news though his speech begins with the conventionalized features of the servus currens monologue. Stasimus has tarried too long at the tavern and is in haste to get back to his master for fear of a whipping. Charmides has a

¹This passage is connected with the problem of contamination in the Stichus. Leo (Nachr. d. Gött. Ges. [1902], 375 ff.) declares that there is no motivation for the summoning of the parasite by Panegyris and that the parasite did not appear at this place in the original. Cf. also Fraenkel, op. cit., pp. 281 ff.

²For the connection of this scene with the contamination theory cf. Leo and Fraenkel, ibid.

short link monologue after the departure of the sycophanta (997), sees someone running towards him, and decides to withdraw and eavesdrop. Stasimus comes hurrying on stage, urging himself to greater haste; then, recollecting that he has left his ring in the tavern, he turns to go back after it. But on second thought, recalling the character of the company with which he has been drinking, he decides that it would be wasted effort to look for his ring among such a gang of thieves. He starts for home once more but the certainty that his ring has been stolen leads him to deliver a diatribe on public morals.¹ Charmides makes frequent interested comments in aside² but does not identify the speaker until 1055. Dialogue follows.³ In the Curculio Palinurus is held on stage after the departure of Cappadox and the cook (273), and immediately (274) announces the approach of the parasite. He hastily summons Phaedromus from the house and they decide to eavesdrop. Curculio devotes 19 lines (280-98) to the conventional features of the servus currens monologue,⁴ entreaties, commands, and threats to all who bar his way or hinder his progress. Phaedromus' one aside (299-300) reveals no particular curiosity concerning the parasite's message and only mild interest in what he is saying. Curculio continues with two more lines, asking to be directed to Phaedromus, and the eavesdroppers call to him (303). There is characteristic delay in the delivery of the message.

The entrance monody at Eun. 292 ff. is similar to the servus currens monologue in that the new entrant comes on run-

¹Fraenkel (op. cit., pp. 154 ff.) states that this passage from 1028 ff. was an organic part of Philemon's Thesaurus but that Plautus took the episode of the lost ring from another Greek play. Cf. also Jachmann, op. cit., p. 242.

²Charmides' three short asides (1015; 1024; 1027) during the first part of the slave's monologue are Plautine insertions according to Fraenkel (op. cit., p. 158, n. 1.).

³Stasimus' entrance monologue is intended to amuse the audience but the fact that it is overheard by Charmides does not contribute to the amusement. Charmides is held on stage for subsequent dialogue. The eavesdropping and the asides are intended to relieve the awkward position of the silent actor.

⁴Curculio's speech is entirely Roman according to Leo (Ges. d. Röm. Lit., I, 142 ff.). Cf. also Fraenkel, op. cit., p. 131.

ning, with excited speech and engaged in search. After a one-line link monologue (288), Parmeno announces the approach of Chaerea and comments on the fact that he is in haste and is looking for something. As revealed in the entrance monody, Chaerea's emotions are divided between exultation at the beauty of the girl whom he has been following and disgust at himself for losing sight of her. Parmeno comments in aside (298): "nescioquid de amore loquitur." Chaerea continues and at 303 becomes aware of the presence of Parmeno.

At Bacch. 640 Pistoclerus and Mnesilochus, held over for subsequent action, are forced to listen to the entrance monody of Chrysalus. Chrysalus comes on stage with a joyous song, filled with exultation because he has tricked the senex and aided his young master in a love affair. The monody contains nothing of interest for the eavesdroppers. They are aware of Chrysalus' trick, and they know also, a fact of which Chrysalus is ignorant, that the trick has miscarried through the misapprehension of Mnesilochus. There are no asides. In the Andria Pamphilus is heaping abuse on Davos for the failure of the intrigue against the senex when Charinus appears, unannounced, with an entrance monody (625-41) filled with disappointment, discouragement, and indignation. He has learned that Pamphilus has given his promise to marry the daughter of Chremes. There are no comments in aside from the heldover characters but Pamphilus comes forward with explanations and excuses at the conclusion of the monody.¹ The matrona and Menaechmus II, held over for subsequent action, are forced to listen to the long entrance monody of the senex (Men. 753-74). The matrona mistaking Menaechmus II for her husband and outraged by his refusal to recognize her, sends a messenger to summon her father. She calls attention to the old man at 747 but Menaechmus still declares that he has seen neither the old man nor herself before that day. They stand in silence as the senex comes on stage, complaining of the ills of old age.² He speculates as to the reason for his being sum-

¹In the case of Charinus in the Andria and Chrysalus in the Bacchides the dramatist is interested in portraying the mood of the entering character. The eavesdropping is incidental.

²Conventional speech of the old man, with perhaps some comic value. The eavesdropping contributes nothing.

moned by his daughter and suspects that she is having trouble with her husband. His daughter goes forward to meet him at 775. Another example of futile eavesdropping appears at Men. 899-908. Alarmed by the strange behavior of his supposed son-in-law, the senex has summoned a doctor. The senex and medicus occupy the stage at 898; the senex announces the approach of Menaechmus I and suggests: "opseruemus quam rem agat." Menaechmus comes on stage with a ten-line soliloquy (899-908), filled with disgust at the bad luck which has dogged his footsteps all day and with indignation at the parasite who has betrayed him to his wife. He concludes with: "ne ego homo uiuo miser." "Do you hear what he is saying?" asks the old man, and the doctor replies: "se miserum praedicet." At Capt. 997 Hegio announces to Philocrates that Tyndarus is approaching. They make no comment on his entrance monologue (998-1005), which consists of a comic description of the quarry and his experiences there. Hegio calls to him at 1006. At Poen. 1280 the stage is occupied by Hanno and his two daughters and Agorastocles when the miles comes, unannounced, from the house of the pimp. His entrance monologue, filled with invective against the pimp and his amica, is unheeded by all except Adelphasium. Her timorous outcry (1292-93), a plea for Hanno's protection, is perhaps occasioned by her seeing and hearing the miles. But Anterastilis' expression of affection for her father at 1294 contains no hint that she is aware of the miles' approach. The soldier continues and catches sight of the group at 1296.¹

Entrance dialogues overheard by the heldover character are less numerous but exhibit the same futility in eavesdropping. If the dramatist wishes to give some introduction to new characters through entrance dialogue, or if he is interested in

¹For other examples of futile eavesdropping in which the entrance monologue is overheard by the heldover character cf. Asin. 381; Aul. 178; Bacch. 235; 770; Capt. 251; Cas. 165; 798; Curc. 557; 591; 679; Epid. 437; Merc. 562; Most. 532; 1122; Persa 738; Poen. 615; 746; 1338; Pseud. 1038; Rud. 259; 706; Stich. 454; 579; Truc. 322; 669; 854; 893; 914; And. 175; 404; 684; 842; 904; Heaut. 679; 805; 842; Eun. 81; 454; 727; 739; 840; 971; 1002; 1031; 1049; Phorm. 465; 894; Hec. 336; 623; 727; Adelph. 209; 254; 889; 899. These are for the most part brief, two- to four-line entrance speeches. However, the situation is the same as in the case of the more extended speeches.

characterization or the creation of atmosphere, the heldover character must wait on the sidelines until he is needed for later dialogue. The situation is similar to that created by the conventionalized entrance monologue in connection with the heldover character.

Epidicus holds the stage with a link monody after the departure of Thesprio (Epid. 80) and announces the approach of Stratippocles and Chaeribulus, saying (103): "huc concedam, orationem unde horum placide persequar." This is the first entrance of these two young men and their dialogue (104-23) provides an introduction and some expository material, which serves to supplement what Thesprio has already given.¹ Epidicus has one comment in aside (124-26) upon hearing that his master is relying upon the slave's wits in procuring financial assistance. This has been anticipated by Epidicus (81 ff.). At Pseud. 693 Pseudolus concludes a long link monologue (667-93) with an announcement of the arrival of Calidorus and Charinus and comments on the timeliness of their coming. Their entrance dialogue (694-701) contains nothing of interest for Pseudolus and is apparently unheeded by him. He comes forward at 703 with a burlesque royal greeting. The futility of eavesdropping is illustrated in a scene at Trin. 402-32. In his father's absence Lesbonicus has wasted his property and is reduced to extreme poverty.² Lysiteles wishes to relieve his friend's condition by marrying the sister of Lesbonicus without a dowry. He persuades his father, Philto, to request the consent of Lesbonicus. Lysiteles leaves the stage at 391. Philto remains with a link monologue and announces Lesbonicus and Stasimus as coming from the house (401). The entrance dialogue (402-32) portrays master and slave as careless, reckless, and extravagant in matters of finance. Philto expresses his disapproval in asides (416-17; 422-24), but what he overhears only serves to confirm what he had already learned from his son (330 ff.). Philto must realize that a marriage alliance with this young man is not desirable but he goes ahead to discharge his son's commission. At Trin. 615 Stasimus remains on stage after the departure of Charmides, filling the interval with a link monologue. At 622 he announces the hurried

¹Cf. Fields, op. cit., pp. 49-53.

²Cf. Fields, op. cit., pp. 14-17.

approach of Lesbonicus and Lysiteles and declares his intention to eavesdrop. He listens attentively for 75 lines (627-704) without asides¹ as they debate the question of a dowry for Lesbonicus' sister. Lesbonicus wishes to give as a dowry the farm which is his sole remaining possession but Lysiteles refuses to accept it. At 705 Stasimus suddenly shows himself with the words: "Bravo, bravo, Lysiteles, encore." And he declares that Lysiteles has won the victory in the debate. His interruption is not well received and the two youths depart shortly to their respective homes (716). Stasimus is left to fill the interval before the arrival of Megaronides and Callicles with a 12-line exit monologue (717-28). In the Miles Palaestrio is kept on stage with a short link monologue (867-69). At 870 he announces the arrival of the senex and Acroteleutium and comments on the attractive figure of the latter. He apparently pays no attention to their entrance dialogue (874-96) but at its conclusion, remarking: "cesso ego illis obuiam ire," he goes forward to greet them. At Rud. 839 Labrax is on stage, guarded by lorarii, when Plesidippus and Trachalio return, unannounced. Their entrance dialogue (839-51) is concerned with the pimp's attack on the girls, Palaestra and Ampelisca. Labrax' aside at 844-45 is perhaps occasioned by his catching sight of the new entrants rather than any actual eavesdropping. At Heaut. 381-97 Clinia and Syrus eavesdrop on the entrance dialogue of Bacchis and Antiphila without appreciable results. The dramatist is interested in introducing and characterizing the courtesan and the virgo. The eavesdropping is incidental. At Phorm. 485-503 in the entrance dialogue of Phaedria and Dorio is presented the conventional scene of the penniless lover and the obdurate pimp. Geta and Antipho, held over from the previous scene, are forced to stand apart during this presentation. Their asides indicate close attention to the dialogue of the new entrants but their eavesdropping contributes nothing to the scene. Similarly the eavesdropping of Philolaches and Philematium during the entrance

¹This is an unusually long period of eavesdropping without asides. The primary purpose of the aside in these scenes is to relieve the awkward position of the otherwise silent actor. But if the impression of eavesdropping is effectively created by other means, such as a declaration of intention at the beginning of the scene and by responsive reaction in facial expression, the asides are less necessary. Cf. Prescott, Class. Phil., XXXII (1937), 203.

dialogue of Callidamates and Delphium at Most. 313-35 serves only to give some occupation to non-participating actors.¹

In the conventionalized type of entrance distinguished by the double entrance monologue, the first entrant usually eavesdrops on the second entrant. The eavesdropping is frequently valueless except in so far as it obviates the silent actor. At Truc. 25 Diniarchus enters with a long monologue in which he condemns the greed of courtesans and the folly of lovers, citing as example his own experience with Phronesium. At 93 he announces the courtesan's maid, Astaphium, and eavesdrops on her entrance monologue (95-114). Diniarchus' one comment in aside (112) is indication that he is listening attentively to Astaphium as she describes the conditions in a courtesan's household, but there is no advantage in the eavesdropping per se. The two entrance monologues are part of the exposition; they serve to introduce new characters and provide atmosphere appropriate to this drama, the theme of which is the rapacious courtesan. At Poen. 817 Milphio makes his appearance with a brief entrance monologue in which he expresses a desire to damage the pimp who is torturing his master, because "*seruire amanti miseria est, praesertim qui quod amat caret.*" At 821 he announces the approach of the pimp's slave, Syncerastus, and decides to eavesdrop. In a 27-line entrance monologue (823-50) Syncerastus describes his own misery as the slave of a pimp, and the evil practices of the pimp's household. Milphio listens with interested asides (839-41; 845-46; 849-850) tinged with sarcasm, providing mild comic effect; but the eavesdropping is incidental, a result of the entrance technique. He calls to Syncerastus at 851 and dialogue follows in which Milphio receives information of considerable importance (894 ff.).² At Amph. 861 Jupiter

¹For other examples of entrance dialogue overheard by the heldover character without appreciable results cf. Cas. 353; 720; Mil. 1137; Persa 302; Poen. 578; Rud. 839; 1045; 1357; Heaut. 614; 954; Eun. 912; Phorm. 485; 713; Hec. 415; 451.

²An intrigue devised by Milphio and based on the information furnished by Syncerastus is never carried out because Hanno is brought in as the discovering agent (cf. supra, pp. 43-44). Because of this and other features the Poenulus is held to be contaminated by some scholars. For the evidence and references to earlier authorities cf. Fraenkel, op. cit., pp. 262 ff. Cf. also Jachmann, op. cit., pp. 196 ff. For arguments against the contamination theory cf. Krysiniet, Eos, XXXIV (1932-33), 1 ff.

comes on stage with an explanatory entrance monologue addressed to the audience in which he identifies himself as Jupiter in the guise of Amphitruo. He promises to clear up the misunderstanding which he has caused between Alcumena and her husband. His nunc hanc adloquar serves as an announcement for Alcumena and she comes from the house with a short entrance monologue (882-90). As her distress and indignation is revealed Jupiter observes in a rather long aside (891-96) that he must do as she demands and as Amphitruo accept the consequences of the anger which has been roused against Amphitruo through his (Jupiter's) agency. Alcumena catches sight of her supposed husband at 897 and dialogue follows. At Trin. 820 Charmides comes on the stage with the conventional monologue of the traveler returned from abroad. As he is preparing to go into his own house (839) he discovers the sycophanta approaching and decides to wait and see what this strange looking character is up to. The sycophanta's entrance monologue (843-69) consists of a resume of the instructions which he has received from Callicles.¹ Charmides' comments in aside (851-52; 861-65; 878-79) do not indicate any extended over-hearing of the entrance monologue; they are concerned with the appearance and actions of the stranger, rather than with the content of his speech. But the asides serve to relieve the silence of the non-participating actor as much as in actual eavesdropping.

At Capt. 768 Ergasilus enters with a song of joy at the wonderful news he is bringing, and urges himself to greater haste so that he may be the first to tell the news to Hegio. At 781 Hegio comes from the house, unannounced, with a nine-line soliloquy, which he breaks off as he sees the hurrying figure of the parasite. Hegio eavesdrops² with frequent asides as Ergasilus continues with the conventional features of the servus currens monologue (790-833), urging himself to greater effort, threatening destruction to all who stand in his path, announcing

¹This is a friendly intrigue on the part of Callicles and Megaronides to provide a dowry for the daughter of Charmides. The sycophanta has letters and a sum of money purporting to come from Charmides. The intrigue fails and is rendered unnecessary through the arrival of Charmides himself.

²A deviation from the usual eavesdropping pattern. Cf. supra, p. 18.

that he has a load of joy for Hegio for which he expects to be rewarded with food in abundance and forever. As he is on the point of knocking at the door Hegio calls to him and obtains the message after characteristic delay.

At Trin. 1115 Lysiteles comes on the stage with a song of joy because he has heard the news of Charmides' return. He is preparing to make a call on Charmides in order to obtain confirmation of his betrothal to the latter's daughter. The sound of the door opening causes him to step into the background and he eavesdrops on the entrance dialogue of Charmides and Callicles (1125-49).¹ He overhears Charmides express surprise that his daughter has been betrothed to Lysiteles and decides to listen further since they are talking about a subject that concerns him so closely. But the conversation turns to another matter and Lysiteles comes forward and reveals himself at 1149. In the Captivi Ergasilus appears with the conventional monologue of the parasite (49-109), at the conclusion of which he calls attention to the opening of Hegio's door. Hegio enters at 110, accompanied by the lorarius, to whom he is giving instructions concerning the captives recently purchased. There is a brief interchange² between Hegio and the lorarius with mild comic effect, after which the lorarius makes his exit (125). Ergasilus has a four-line aside (129-32) relative to the calling to which the old man has been forced to stoop. Hegio's attention is attracted by the sound of Ergasilus' voice and contact is established between them.

An unusual kind of entrance technique provides an opportunity for eavesdropping at Eun. 391. At 390 Parmeno and Chaerea leave the stage to make preparations for introducing Chaerea, in guise of the eunuch, into the courtesan's household. At 391 Thraso and Gnatho appear with entrance dialogue, Gnatho assuring the miles that his gifts have made a splendid impression on Thais. At 394 Parmeno returns with a remark in aside to

¹This type of entrance technique is a variation of the more frequent type, A monologue, B monologue, AB monologue, in which the first entrant A listens to the entrance monologue of the second entrant B. In this type, A monologue, BC dialogue, entrance dialogue is overheard. Cf. supra, p. 6.

²The interchange between Hegio and the lorarius is Plautus' insertion according to Fraenkel (op. cit., p. 143, n. 3).

the effect that he is watching for a suitable time to make his presentation.¹ He catches sight of the miles and parasite and listens through nearly 60 lines of dialogue, an enumeration of his accomplishments by the miles with the parasite leading him on. At 454 Thais comes from the house and engages the pair in conversation. Parmeno continues to eavesdrop and comes forward to join them at 461. Parmeno's asides are few and make no contribution of importance.²

¹Cf. supra, p. 17. The brief interval, 390-94, is hardly long enough for Parmeno to have completed his preparations within the house. It is difficult to explain his early return since he learns nothing from the eavesdropping and his presence seems to contribute little by way of entertainment value.

²For other examples of futile eavesdropping resulting from the A monologue, B monologue type of entrance cf. Capt. 533; Cas. 539; Cist. 542; Epid. 610; Mil. 156; Persa 272; 405; Pseud. 1063; Rud. 615; Stich. 655; Heaut. 512; 879; Phorm. 51; Hec. 522; Adelph. 635; 719; 789.

CONCLUSION

Eavesdropping in Roman comedy as a recurrent phenomenon at the beginning of scenes is not an end in itself. It is not usually the result of any appreciation on the dramatist's part of the value of eavesdropping as such, but rather is a derivative issue of certain stereotyped and conventionalized features of the dramatic technique of comedy in which eavesdropping values are accidental.

(1) Opportunity for eavesdropping at the beginning of scenes is provided as a result of a combination of two factors: (a) In order to keep the action continuous and to avoid the necessity of motivating re-entrances a character or characters are held over from the previous scene. (b) The entrance technique of comedy prefers monologue entrance to dialogue entrance. During the entrance monologue of the new arrival the held-over character is forced to remain silent and withdrawn from the action. He is thus in an ideal position to eavesdrop. (Quite apart from any use of the held-over character one special and recurrent form of entrance technique itself provides conditions that make eavesdropping probable. Not only does entrance technique favor the monologue entrance but it especially cultivates a double-barrelled monologue entrance in which A enters with a monologue, B enters with a monologue. In this case the first entrant, A, is in a position to eavesdrop on B, the second entrant.)

(2) Given the opportunity for eavesdropping as provided by the conditions described above the dramatist was further impelled to make use of it as a device for lubricating the stage action. A silent character, aloof from the action, presented a somewhat difficult problem to the stage manager. The difficulty was partially solved by representing the silent actor as listening attentively to the entrance speech of the newly arriving character. The silence of the non-participating actor was usually still further relieved by giving him some remarks in aside.

In such eavesdropping scenes we should not expect the

eavesdropper to hear in every instance something of interest or advantage to himself. It would make too great a demand upon the ingenuity of the dramatist to have the newly arriving character say something at each entrance which would be of importance to the eavesdropper or have some effect on the action. The ineffectiveness of many eavesdropping scenes is even less surprising when we consider that entrance technique is itself stereotyped and entrance speeches frequently conventional, on some general theme not closely related to the action of the drama.

We have found a small number of scenes in which the eavesdropper gains information of real value to himself, information which makes an essential contribution to the plot.¹ In a somewhat larger number of examples the eavesdropper overhears something of less value. In these latter examples we believe that the dramatist has not invented the eavesdropping scene for the purpose of overhearing, but that, having the scene at hand, he has been able to give it an apparent reality by making some use of it. In addition we have noted in a small number of scenes minor, incidental values, contributions to fear, joy, and suspense in the minor phases of the action.² From observations in the commentary of Donatus we learn that the stirring of such emotions even in the minor phases of the action was felt to have dramatic value, contributing with cumulative effect to the dramatic value of the emotions arising from the major error.³ Finally we have suggested on our own responsibility that some desirable effects of secondary nature are inherent in the eavesdropping scene, chiefly enlargement of comic effect.⁴ In most instances the secondary value is not of such significance as to be able to justify or explain the existence of the eavesdropping scene. It is a derivative value which owes its existence to

¹There are 32 examples in which eavesdropping makes some contribution to the major features of the plot (cf. supra, chap. III). But 15 of this number are deviations from the normal pattern, and they should be considered separately in any final summing up of the evidence. Cf. supra, pp. 13 ff. Of the 17 examples remaining only five (Pseud. 594; Bacch. 842; Cist. 536; 671; Truc. 775) make contributions of real significance to the plot.

²Cf. supra, chap. IV.

³Cf. Donatus ad Phorm. 606; 179.

⁴Cf. supra, chap. V.

another cause, evidence of the skill of the dramatist in utilizing the eavesdropping scene already at hand.

There remain a large number of eavesdropping scenes in which the presence and asides of the eavesdropper appear to make no contribution at all.¹ The character on stage is merely waiting to take part in the action which follows the conclusion of the new arrival's entrance speech. In the meantime the dramatist occupies him with apparent eavesdropping. But the eavesdropper gains no information of value and his presence and asides contribute nothing to the scene.

¹Cf. supra, chap. VI.

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¹The type of entrance technique to which an eavesdropping scene belongs is indicated by (a1), (b1), (a2), or (b2) following the verse number. (x) indicates that the scene is a deviation from the normal pattern. Cf. *supra*, pp. 5, 13.

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899	(b1)	79	n. 1

